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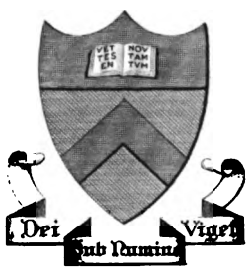

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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN DRYDEN

ILLUSTRATED

WITH NOTES,

HISTORICAL, CRITICAL, AND EXPLANATORY,

AND

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

REVISED AND CORRECTED

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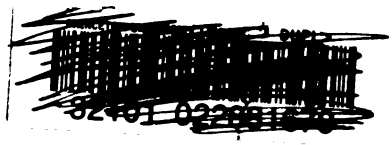

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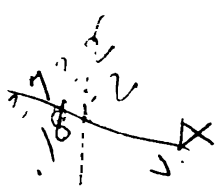

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ALMANZOR AND ALMAHIDE

OR, THE

CONQUEST OF GRANADA

BY THE

SPANIARDS.

A TRAGEDY.

—— *Major rerum mihi nascitur ordo;*
Majus opus moveo. VIRG. ÆNEID.

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[The Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards. In Two Parts. Acted at the Theatre Royal. Written by John Dryden, Servant to His Majesty.

——*Major rerum mihi nascitur ordo;*
Majus opus moveo. VIRG. ÆNEID, 7.

In the Savoy: Printed by T. N. for Henry Herringman, and are to be sold at the Anchor, in the Lower Walk of the New Exchange. 1672.]

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THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

This play,—for the two parts only constitute an entire drama betwixt them,—seems to have been a favourite with Dryden, as well as with the public. In the Essay upon Heroic Plays, as well as in the dedication, the character of Almanzor is dwelt upon with that degree of complacency which an author experiences in analysing a successful effort of his genius. Unquestionably the gross improbability of a hero, by his single arm, turning the tide of battle as he lists, did not appear so shocking in the age of Dryden, as in ours. There is no doubt, that, while personal strength and prowess were of more consequence than military skill and conduct, the feats of a single man were sometimes sufficient to determine the fate of an engagement, more especially when exerted by a knight, sheathed in complete mail, against the heartless and half-armed mass, which constituted the feudal infantry. Those who have perused Barbour's History of Robert Bruce, Geoffrey de Vinsauf's account of the wars of Richard Cœur de Lion, or even the battles detailed by Froissart and Joinville, are familiar with instances of breaches defended, and battles decided, by the prowess of a single arm. The leader of a feudal army was expected by his followers not only to point out the path of victory, but to lead the way in person. It is true, that the military art had been changed in this particular long before the days of Dryden. Complete armour was generally laid aside; fire-arms had superseded the use of the lance and battle-axe; and, above all, the universal institution of standing armies had given discipline and military skill their natural and decisive superiority over untaught strength and enthusiastic valour. But the memory of what had been was still familiar to the popular mind, and preserved not only by numerous legends and traditions, but also by the cast of the fashionable works of fiction. It is, indeed, curious to remark, how many minute remnants of a system of ancient manners can be traced long after it has become totally obsolete. Even down to the eighteenth century, the portrait of every soldier of rank was attired in complete armour, though, perhaps, he never saw a suit of mail excepting in the Tower of London; and on the same

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principle of prescriptive custom, Addison was the first poet who ventured to celebrate a victorious general for skill and conduct, instead of such feats as are appropriated to Guy of Warwick, or Bevis of Hampton. The fashion of attributing mighty effects to individual valour being thus prevalent, even in circumstances when every one knew the supposition to be entirely gratuitous, the same principle, with much greater propriety, continued to be applied in works of fiction, where the scene was usually carried back to times in which the personal strength of a champion really had some efficacy. It must be owned, however, that the authors of the French romances carried the influence of individual strength and courage beyond all bounds of modesty and reason. In the Grand Cyrus, Artamenes, upon a moderate computation, exterminates with his own hand, in the course of the work, at least a hundred thousand fighting men. These monstrous fictions, however, constituted the amusement of the young and the gay,* in the age of Charles II., and from one of these very books Dryden admits his having drawn, at least in part, the character of his Moorish warrior. The public was, therefore, every way familiarised with such chivalrous exploits as those of Almanzor; and if they did not altogether command the belief, at least they did not revolt the imagination, of an audience: And this must certainly be admitted as a fair apology for the extravagance of his heroic achievements.

But it is not only the actual effects of Almanzor's valour, which appear to us unnatural, but also the extraordinary principles and motives by which those exertions are guided. Here also, we must look back to the Gothic romances, and to those of Scudéry and Calprenède. In fact, the extravagance of sentiment is no less necessary than the extravagance of achievement to constitute a true knight-errant; and such is Almanzor. Honour and love were the sole deities worshipped by this extraordinary race, who, though their memory and manners are preserved chiefly in works of fiction, did once exist in real life, and actually conducted armies, and governed kingdoms, upon principles as strained and hyperbolical as those of the Moorish champion. If Almanzor, at the command of his mistress, aids his hated rival to the destruction of his own

* There is something ludicrous in the idea of a beauty, or a gallant, of that gay and licentious court poring over a work of five or six folio volumes by way of amusement; but such was the taste of the age, that Fynes Morison, in his precepts to travellers, can "think no book better for his pupils' discourse than Amadis of Gaule; for the knights-errant and the ladies of court do therein exchange courtly speeches."

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hopes, he only discharges the duty of a good knight, who was bound to sacrifice himself, and all his hopes and wishes, at the slightest command of her, to whom he had vowed his service, and who, in the language of chivalry, was to him as the soul is to the body. The reader may recollect the memorable invasion of England by James IV. of Scotland, in which he hazarded and actually lost his own life, and the flower of his nobility, because the queen of France, who called him her knight, had commanded him to march three miles on English ground for her sake.

Less can be said to justify the extravagant language in which Almanzor threatens his enemies, and vaunts his own importance. This is not common in the heroes of romance, who are usually as remarkable for their modesty of language as for their prowess; and still more seldom does, in real life, a vain-glorious boaster vindicate by his actions the threats of his tongue. It is true, that men of a fervent and glowing character are apt to strain their speech beyond the modesty of ordinary conversation, and display, in their language, the fire which glows in their bosoms; but the subject of their effusions is usually connected not with their own personal qualities, or feats, but with some extraneous object of their pursuit, or admiration. Thus, the burst of Hotspur concerning the pursuit of honour paints his enthusiastic character; but it would be hard to point out a passage indicating that exuberant confidence in his own prowess, and contempt of every one else, so liberally exhibited by Almanzor. Instances of this defect are but too thickly sown through the piece; for example the following rant:—

> If from thy hands alone my death can be,
> I am immortal, and a God to thee.
> If I would kill thee now, thy fate 's so low,
> That I must stoop ere I can give the blow.
> But mine is fixed so far above thy crown,
> That all thy men,
> Piled on thy back, can never pull it down.
> But, at my ease, thy destiny I send,
> By ceasing from this hour to be thy friend.
> Like heaven, I need but only to stand still;
> And, not concurring to thy life, I kill.
> Thou canst no title to my duty bring;
> I am not thy subject, and my soul 's thy king.
> Farewell! When I am gone,
> There 's not a star of thine dare stay with thee;
> I 'll whistle thy tame fortune after me;
> And whirl fate with me wheresoe'er I fly,
> As winds drive storms before them in the sky.

This curious passage did not escape the malicious criticism

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of Settle, who, besides noticing the extravagant egotism of the hero, questions, with some probability, whether Abdalla would have chosen to scale Almanzor's fate, at the risk of the personal consequences of having all his men piled on his own back. In the same scene, Almanzor is so unreasonable as to tell his rival,

> Thou shalt not dare
> To be so impudent as to despair.

And again,

> What are ten thousand subjects, such as they?
> If I am scorned, I'll take myself away.

Dryden's apology for these extravagances seems to be, that Almanzor is in a passion. But, although talking nonsense is a common effect of passion, it seems hardly one of those consequences adapted to show forth the character of a hero in theatrical representation.

It must be owned, however, that although the part of Almanzor contains these and other bombastic passages, there are many also which convey what the poet desired to represent —the aspirations of a mind so heroic as almost to surmount the bonds of society, and even the very laws of the universe, leaving us often in doubt whether the vehemence of the wish does not even disguise the impossibility of its accomplishment.

> Good heaven! thy book of fate before me lay,
> But to tear out the journal of this day.
> Or, if the order of the world below
> Will not the gap of one whole day allow,
> Give me that minute, when she made her vow.
> That minute, even the happy from their bliss might give,
> And those, who live in grief a shorter time would live.
> So small a link, if broke, the eternal chain
> Would, like divided waters, join again.
> It wonnot be; the fugitive is gone,
> Pressed by the crowd of following minutes on:
> That precious moment's out of nature fled,
> And in the heap of common rubbish laid,
> Of things that once have been, and now decayed.

In the less inflated parts, the ideas are usually as just, as ingenious and beautiful; for example:—

> No; there is a necessity in fate,
> Why still the brave bold man is fortunate;
> He keeps his object ever full in sight,
> And that assurance holds him firm and right.
> True, 'tis a narrow path that leads to bliss,
> But right before there is no precipice:
> Fear makes men look aside, and then their footing miss.

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The character of Almanzor is well known as the original of Drawcansir, in "The Rehearsal," into whose mouth parodies of some of Dryden's most extravagant flights have been put by the Duke of Buckingham. Shaftesbury also, whose family had smarted under Dryden's satire, attempts to trace the applause bestowed on "The Conquest of Granada" to what he calls "the correspondence and relation between our *Royal Theatre* and popular *Circus*, or *Bear-Garden*. For, in the former of these assemblys, 'tis undeniable, that, at least, the two upper regions, or galleries, contain such spectators as indifferently frequent each place of sport. So that 'tis no wonder we hear such applause resounded on the victories of an *Almanzor*, when the same parties had possibly no later than the day before bestowed their applause as freely on the victorious *Butcher*, the hero of another stage." *Miscellaneous Reflections. Miscell. 5.*

The other personages of the drama sink into Lilliputians beside the gigantic Almanzor, although the under plot of the loves of Ozmyn and Benzayda is beautiful in itself, and ingeniously managed. The virtuous Almahide is a fit object for the adoration of Almanzor; but her husband is a poor pageant of royalty. As for Lyndaraxa, her repeated and unparalleled treachery can only be justified by the extreme imbecility of her lovers.

The plot of the play is, in part, taken from history. During the last years of its existence, Granada, the poor remnant of the Moorish empire in Spain, was torn to pieces with intestine discord, and assailed without by the sword of the Christians. The history of the civil wars of Granada, affirmed to be translated into Spanish from the Arabian, gives a romantic, but not altogether fabulous, account of their discord. But a romance in the French taste, called Almahide, seems to have been the chief source from which our author drew his plot.

In the conduct of the story there is much brilliancy of event. The reader, or spectator, is never allowed to repose on the scene before him; and although the changes of fortune are too rapid to be either probable, or altogether pleasing, yet they arrest the attention by their splendour and importance, and interest us in spite of our more sober judgment. The introduction of the ghost of Almanzor's mother seems to have been intended to show how the hero could support even an interview with an inhabitant of the other world. At least, the professed purpose of her coming might have been safely trusted to the virtue of Almahide, and her power over her lover. It afforded an opportunity, however, to throw in some

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fine poetry, of which Dryden has not failed to avail himself. Were it not a peculiar attribute of the heroic drama, it might be mentioned as a defect, that during the siege of the last possession of the Spanish Moors, by an enemy hated for his religion, and for his success, the principle of patriotism is hardly once alluded to through the whole piece. The fate, or the wishes, of Almahide, Lyndaraxa, and Benzayda, are all that interest the Moorish warriors around them, as if the Christian was not thundering at their gates, to exterminate at once their nation and religion. Indeed, so essentially necessary are the encouragements of beauty to military achievement, that we find Queen Isabella ordering to the field of battle a *corps de reserve* of her maids of honour, to animate the fighting warriors with their smiles, and counteract the powerful charms of the Moorish damsels. Nor is it an inferior fault, that, although the characters are called Moors, there is scarce any expression, or allusion, which can fix the reader's attention upon their locality, except an occasional interjection to Allah or Mahomet.

If, however, the reader can abstract his mind from the qualities now deemed essential to a play, and consider the Conquest of Granada as a piece of romantic poetry, there are few compositions in the English language, which convey a more lively and favourable display of the magnificence of fable, of language, and of action, proper to that style of composition. Amid the splendid ornaments of the structure we lose sight of occasional disproportion and incongruity; and, at an early age particularly, there are few poems which make a more deep impression upon the imagination than the Conquest of Granada.

The two parts of this drama were brought out in the same season, probably in winter 1669, or spring 1670. They were received with such applause, that Langbaine conceives their success to have been the occasion of Dryden's undervaluing his predecessors in dramatic writing. The Conquest of Granada was not printed till 1672.

[This play is beyond all question the representative piece of heroic drama, and the fact that it owes a certain amount of suggestion to the romances of *Ibrahim* and *Almahide* is probably the ground, as far as there is any, for the general affiliation of that drama to the singular work of Mademoiselle de Scudéry and her fellows. The somewhat unintelligent industry of Langbaine, Gildon, etc., has traced various scenes to separate passages of the two romances just mentioned. A sounder criticism will see in the drama only a certain indebted-

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ness to the general spirit of the said romances, an indebtedness which is less fully shared by the contemporary drama of France itself. The play (or rather the two plays) is so decidedly the specimen of the style, and its argument is so intricate, that it seems worth while to reproduce (as I am enabled to do by the kindness of Messrs. Macmillan) the sketch of the plot and incidents given in my *Dryden* (English Men of Letters) pp. 46-51 :—

"The kingdom of Granada under its last monarch, Boabdelin, is divided by the quarrels of factions, or rather families —the Abencerrages and the Zegrys. At a festival held in the capital this dissension breaks out. A stranger interferes on what appears to be the weaker side, and kills a prominent leader of the opposite party, altogether disregarding the king's injunctions to desist. He is seized by the guards and ordered for execution, but is then discovered to be Almanzor, a valiant person lately arrived from Africa, who has rendered valuable assistance to the Moors in their combat with the Spaniards. The king thereupon apologises, and Almanzor addresses much outrageous language to the factions. This is successful, and harmony is apparently restored. Then there enters the Duke of Arcos, a Spanish envoy, who propounds hard conditions; but Almanzor remarks that 'the Moors have Heaven and me,' and the duke retires. Almahide, the king's betrothed, sends a messenger to invite him to a dance; but Almanzor insists upon a sally first, and the first act ends with the acceptance of this order of amusement. The second opens with the triumphant return of the Moors, the ever-victorious Almanzor having captured the Duke of Arcos. Then is introduced the first female character of importance, Lyndaraxa, sister of Zulema, the Zegry chief, and representative throughout the drama of the less amiable qualities of womankind. Abdalla, the king's brother, makes love to her, and she very plainly tells him that if he were king she might have something to say to him. Zulema's factiousness strongly seconds his sister's ambition and her jealousy of Almahide, and the act ends by the formation of a conspiracy against Boabdelin, the conspirators resolving to attach the invincible Almanzor to their side. The third act borrows its opening from the incident of Hotspur's wrath, Almanzor being provoked with Boabdelin for the same cause as Harry Percy with Henry IV. Thus he is disposed to join Abdalla, while Abdelmelech, the chief of the Abencerrages, is introduced in a scene full of 'sighs and flames,' as the prince's rival for the hand of Lyndaraxa. The promised dance takes place with one of Dryden's delightful, and, alas, scarcely ever wholly

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quotable lyrics. The first two stanzas may however be given :—

Beneath a myrtle's shade,
Which love for none but happy lovers made,
I slept; and straight my love before me brought
Phyllis, the object of my waking thought.
Undressed she came my flames to meet,
While love strewed flowers beneath her feet,
Flowers which, so pressed by her, became more sweet.

From the bright vision's head
A careless veil of lawn was loosely spread,
From her white temples fell her shaded hair,
Like cloudy sunshine, not too brown nor fair.
Her hands, her lips, did love inspire;
Her every grace my heart did fire:
But most her eyes, which languished with desire.

"While, however, the king and his court are listening and looking, mischief is brewing. Almanzor, Abdalla, and the Zegrys are in arms. The king is driven in; Almahide is captured. Then a scene takes places between Almanzor and Almahide in the full spirit of the style. Almanzor sues for Almahide as a prisoner that he may set her at liberty; but a rival appears in the powerful Zulema. Almanzor is disobliged by Abdalla, and at once makes his way to the citadel, whither Boabdelin has fled, and offers him his services. At the beginning of the fourth act they are of course accepted with joy, and equally of course effectual. Almanzor renews his suit, but Almahide refers him to her father. The fifth act is still fuller of extravagances. Lyndaraxa holds a fort which has been committed to her against both parties, and they discourse with her from without the walls. The unlucky Almanzor prefers his suit to the king and to Almahide's father; has recourse to violence on being refused, and is overpowered—for a wonder—and bound. His life is however spared, and after a parting scene with Almahide he withdraws from the city.

"The second part opens in the Spanish camp but soon shifts to Granada, where the unhappy Boabdelin has to face the mutinies provoked by the expulsion of Almanzor. The king has to stoop to entreat Almahide, now his queen, to use her influence with her lover to come back. An act of fine confused fighting follows, in which Lyndaraxa's castle is stormed, the stormers in their turn driven out by the Duke of Arcos and Abdalla, who has joined the Spaniards, and a general *imbroglio* created. But Almanzor obeys Almahide's summons with the result of more sighs and flames. The conduct of

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Almahide is unexceptionable, but Boabdelin's jealousy is inevitably aroused, and this in its turn mortally offends the queen, which again offends Almanzor. More inexplicable embroilment follows, and Lyndaraxa tries her charms vainly on the champion. The war once more centres round the Albayzin, Lyndaraxa's sometime fortress, and it is not flippant to say that every one fights with every one else; after which the hero sees the ghost of his mother, and addresses it *more suo*. Yet another love-scene follows, and then Zulema, who has not forgotten his passion for Almahide, brings a false accusation against her, the assumed partner of her guilt being however not Almanzor but Abdelmelech. This leaves the hero free to undertake the wager of battle for his mistress, though he is distracted with jealous fear that Zulema's tale is true. The result of the ordeal is a foregone conclusion; but Almahide, though her innocence is proved, is too angry with her husband for doubting her to forgive him, and solemnly forswears his society. She and Almanzor meet once more, and by this time even the conventionalities of the heroic play allow him to kiss her hand. The king is on the watch and breaks in with fresh accusations; but the Spaniards at the gates cut short the discussion and (at last) the embroilment and suffering of true love. The catastrophe is arrived at in the most approved manner. Boabdelin dies fighting; Lyndaraxa, who has given traitorous help with her Zegrys, is proclaimed queen by Ferdinand but almost immediately stabbed by Abdelmelech. Almanzor turns out to be the long-lost son of the Duke of Arcos; and Almahide, encouraged by Queen Isabella, owns that when her year of widowhood is up she may possibly be induced to crown his flames.

"Such is the barest outline of this famous play, and I fear that as it is it is too long, though much has been omitted, including the whole of a pleasing underplot of love between two very creditable lovers, Osmyn and Benzayda. Its preposterous 'revolutions and discoveries,' the wild bombast of Almanzor and others, the apparently purposeless embroilment of the action in ever-new turns and twists, are absurd enough. But there is a kind of generous and noble spirit animating it which could not fail to catch an audience blinded by fashion to its absurdities. There is a skilful sequence even in the most preposterous events, which must have kept up the interest unfalteringly; and all over the dialogue are squandered and lavished flowers of splendid verse. Many of its separate lines are, as has been said, constantly quoted without the least idea on the quoter's part of their origin, and many more are

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quotable. Everybody, for instance, knows the vigorous couplet :—

> Forgiveness to the injured does belong,
> But they ne'er pardon who have done the wrong;

but everybody does not know the preceding couplet, which is perhaps better still :—

> A blush remains in a forgiven face,
> It wears the silent tokens of disgrace.

"Almanzor's tribute to Lyndaraxa's beauty, at the same time that he rejects her advances, is in little, perhaps, as good an instance as could be given of the merits of the poetry and of the stamp of its spirit, and with this I must be content :—

> Fair though you are
> As summer mornings, and your eyes more bright
> Than stars that twinkle on a winter's night;
> Though you have eloquence to warm and move
> Cold age and fasting hermits into love;
> Though Almahide with scorn rewards my care
> Yet than to change 'tis nobler to despair.
> My love 's my soul and that from fate is free,
> 'Tis that unchanged and deathless part of me.

The audience that cheered this was not wholly vile."

It only remains to add that the frequently mentioned Albayzin is a suburb of Granada, and that "Vermilion Towers," or, less poetically, "red house," is the literal meaning of "Alhambra" itself. Scott, following Malone, is probably wrong in supposing that the First Part may have been acted in 1669. See note to Prologue.—Ed.]

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TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE

DUKE.*

SIR,

HEROIC poesy has always been sacred to princes, and to heroes. Thus Virgil inscribed his Æneids to Augustus Cæsar; and of latter ages, Tasso and Ariosto dedicated their poems to the house of Este. It is indeed but justice, that the most excellent and most profitable kind of writing should be addressed by poets to such persons, whose characters have, for the most part, been the guides and patterns of their imitation; and poets, while they imitate, instruct. The feigned hero inflames the true; and the dead virtue animates the living. Since, therefore, the world is governed by precept and example, and both these can only have influence from those persons who are above us; that kind of poesy, which excites to virtue the greatest men, is of the greatest use to humankind.

It is from this consideration, that I have pre-

* James Duke of York, afterwards James II.

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sumed to dedicate to your royal highness these faint representations of your own worth and valour in heroic poetry: Or, to speak more properly, not to dedicate, but to restore to you those ideas, which in the more perfect part of my characters I have taken from you. Heroes may lawfully be delighted with their own praises, both as they are further incitements to their virtue, and as they are the highest returns which mankind can make them for it.

And certainly, if ever nation were obliged, either by the conduct, the personal* valour or the good fortune of a leader, the English are acknowledging, in all of them, to your royal highness. Your whole life has been a continued series of heroic actions; which you began so early, that you were no sooner named in the world, but it was with praise and admiration. Even the first blossoms of your youth paid us all that could be expected from a ripening manhood. While you practised but the rudiments of war, you out-went all other captains; and have since found none to surpass, but yourself alone. The opening of your glory was like that of light: You shone to us from afar; and disclosed your first beams on distant nations: Yet so, that the lustre of them was spread abroad, and reflected brightly on your native country. You were then an honour to it,

* Although the valour of the unfortunate James II. seems to have sunk with his good fortune, there is no reason to question his having merited the compliment in the text. The Duke of Buckingham, in his memoirs, has borne witness to the intrepidity with which he encountered the dangers of his desperate naval actions with the Dutch. Captain Carleton, who was also an eye-witness of his deportment on that occasion, says, that while the balls were flying thickly around, the Duke of York was wont to rub his hands, and exclaim, cheerfully to his captain, "Spragge, Spragge, they follow us fast."

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when it was a reproach to itself. When the fortunate usurper sent his arms to Flanders, many of the adverse party were vanquished by your fame, ere they tried your valour.* The report of it drew over to your ensigns whole troops and companies of converted rebels, and made them forsake successful wickedness, to follow an oppressed and exiled virtue. Your reputation waged war with the enemies of your royal family, even within their trenches; and the more obstinate, or more guilty of them, were forced to be spies over those whom they commanded, lest the name of York should disband that army, in whose fate it was to defeat the Spaniards, and force Dunkirk to surrender. Yet, those victorious forces of the rebels were not able to sustain your arms. Where you charged in person, you were a conqueror. It is true, they afterwards recovered courage; and wrested that victory from others which they had lost to you; and it was a greater action for them to rally, than it was to overcome. Thus, by the presence of your royal highness, the English on both sides remained victorious, and that army, which was broken by your valour, became a terror to those for whom they conquered. Then it was, that at the cost of other nations you informed and cultivated that valour, which was to defend your native country, and to vindicate its honour from the insolence of our encroaching neighbours. When the Hollanders, not contented to withdraw themselves from the obedience which they owed their lawful sovereign,

* When General Lockhart commanded the troops of the Protector in Flanders, the Duke of York was a volunteer in the Spanish army, and was present at the defeat which the latter received before Dunkirk, 17th of June 1658.

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affronted those by whose charity they were first protected; and, being swelled up to a pre-eminence of trade, by a supine negligence on our side, and a sordid parsimony on their own, dared to dispute the sovereignty of the seas, the eyes of three nations were then cast upon you; and by the joint suffrage of king and people, you were chosen to revenge their common injuries; to which, though you had an undoubted title by your birth, you had a greater by your courage. Neither did the success deceive our hopes and expectations: The most glorious victory which was gained by our navy in that war, was in that first engagement; wherein, even by the confession of our enemies, who ever palliate their own losses, and diminish our advantages, your absolute triumph was acknowledged: You conquered at the Hague, as entirely as at London; and the return of a shattered fleet, without an admiral, left not the most impudent among them the least pretence for a false bonfire, or a dissembled day of public thanksgiving. All our achievements against them afterwards, though we sometimes conquered, and were never overcome, were but a copy of that victory, and they still fell short of their original: somewhat of fortune was ever wanting, to fill up the title of so absolute a defeat; or perhaps the guardian angel of our nation was not enough concerned when you were absent, and would not employ his utmost vigour for a less important stake, than the life and honour of a royal admiral.

And if, since that memorable day,* you have

* The defeat of the Dutch off Harwich, 3d June 1665, in which their Admiral, Opdam, was blown up, eighteen of their ships taken, and fourteen destroyed.

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had leisure to enjoy in peace the fruits of so glorious a reputation; it was occasion only has been wanting to your courage, for that can never be wanting to occasion. The same ardour still incites you to heroic actions, and the same concernment for all the interests of your king and brother continues to give you restless nights, and a generous emulation for your own glory. You are still meditating on new labours for yourself, and new triumphs for the nation; and when our former enemies again provoke us, you will again solicit fate to provide you another navy to overcome, and another admiral to be slain. You will then lead forth a nation eager to revenge their past injuries; and, like the Romans, inexorable to peace, till they have fully vanquished. Let our enemies make their boast of a surprise,* as the Samnites did of a successful stratagem; but the *Furcæ Caudinæ* will never be forgiven till they are revenged. I have always observed in your royal highness an extreme concernment for the honour of your country; it is a passion common to you with a brother, the most excellent of kings; and in your two persons are eminent the characters which Homer has given us of heroic virtue; the commanding part in Agamemnon, and the executive in Achilles. And I doubt not from both your actions, but to have abundant matter to fill the annals of a glorious reign, and to perform the part of a just historian to my royal master, without intermixing with it anything of the poet.

In the meantime, while your royal highness is

* The author seems to refer to the burning of the English ships at Chatham, by the Dutch Admiral De Ruyter.

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preparing fresh employments for our pens, I have been examining my own forces, and making trial of myself, how I shall be able to transmit you to posterity. I have formed a hero, I confess, not absolutely perfect, but of an excessive and over-boiling courage; but Homer and Tasso are my precedents. Both the Greek and the Italian poet had well considered, that a tame hero, who never transgresses the bounds of moral virtue, would shine but dimly in an epic poem; the strictness of those rules might well give precepts to the reader, but would administer little of occasion to the writer. But a character of an eccentric virtue is the more exact image of human life, because he is not wholly exempted from its frailties; such a person is Almanzor, whom I present, with all humility, to the patronage of your royal highness. I designed in him a roughness of character, impatient of injuries, and a confidence of himself, almost approaching to an arrogance. But these errors are incident only to great spirits; they are moles and dimples, which hinder not a face from being beautiful, though that beauty be not regular; they are of the number of those amiable imperfections which we see in mistresses, and which we pass over without a strict examination, when they are accompanied with greater graces. And such in Almanzor are a frank and noble openness of nature, an easiness to forgive his conquered enemies, and to protect them in distress; and, above all, an inviolable faith in his affection.

This, sir, I have briefly shadowed to your royal highness, that you may not be ashamed of that hero, whose protection you undertake. Neither would I dedicate him to so illustrious a name, if I were conscious to myself that he did

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or said anything which was wholly unworthy of it. However, since it is not just that your royal highness should defend or own what possibly may be my error, I bring before you this accused Almanzor in the nature of a suspected criminal. By the suffrage of the most and best he already is acquitted; and by the sentence of some, condemned. But as I have no reason to stand to the award of my enemies, so neither dare I trust the partiality of my friends: I make my last appeal to your royal highness, as to a sovereign tribunal. Heroes should only be judged by heroes; because they only are capable of measuring great and heroic actions by the rule and standard of their own. If Almanzor has failed in any point of honour, I must therein acknowledge that he deviates from your royal highness, who are the pattern of it. But if at any time he fulfils the parts of personal valour, and of conduct, of a soldier, and of a general; or, if I could yet give him a character more advantageous than what he has, of the most unshaken friend, the greatest of subjects, and the best of masters, I should then draw to all the world a true resemblance of your worth and virtues; at least, as far as they are capable of being copied by the mean abilities of,

SIR,

Your royal highness's

Most humble, and

Most obedient servant,

J. DRYDEN.

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1672

OF

HEROIC PLAYS.

AN ESSAY.

WHETHER heroic verse ought to be admitted into serious plays, is not now to be disputed: it is already in possession of the stage, and I dare confidently affirm, that very few tragedies, in this age, shall be received without it. All the arguments which are formed against it, can amount to no more than this, that it is not so near conversation as prose, and therefore not so natural. But it is very clear to all who understand poetry, that serious plays ought not to imitate conversation too nearly. If nothing were to be raised above that level, the foundation of poetry would be destroyed. And if you once admit of a latitude, that thoughts may be exalted, and that images and actions may be raised above the life, and described in measure without rhyme, that leads you insensibly from your own principles to mine: you are already so far onward of your way, that you have forsaken the imitation of ordinary converse. You are gone beyond it; and to

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continue where you are, is to lodge in the open fields, betwixt two inns. You have lost that which you call natural, and have not acquired the last perfection of art. But it was only custom which cozened us so long; we thought, because Shakespeare and Fletcher went no further, that there the pillars of poetry were to be erected; that, because they excellently described passion without rhyme, therefore rhyme was not capable of describing it. But time has now convinced most men of that error. It is indeed so difficult to write verse, that the adversaries of it have a good plea against many, who undertook that task, without being formed by art or nature for it. Yet, even they who have written worst in it, would have written worse without it: They have cozened many with their sound, who never took the pains to examine their sense. In fine, they have succeeded; though, it is true, they have more dishonoured rhyme by their good success, than they have done by their ill. But I am willing to let fall this argument: It is free for every man to write, or not to write, in verse, as he judges it to be, or not to be, his talent; or as he imagines the audience will receive it.

For heroic plays, in which only I have used it without the mixture of prose, the first light we had of them, on the English theatre, was from the late Sir William Davenant. It being forbidden him in the rebellious times to act tragedies and comedies, because they contained some matter of scandal to those good people, who could more easily dispossess their lawful sovereign than endure a wanton jest, he was forced to turn his thoughts another way, and to introduce the examples of moral virtue, writ in verse, and

performed in recitative music. The original of this music, and of the scenes which adorned his work, he had from the Italian operas; but he heightened his characters, as I may probably imagine, from the example of Corneille and some French poets. In this condition did this part of poetry remain at his Majesty's return; when, growing bolder, as being now owned by a public authority, he reviewed his "Siege of Rhodes," and caused it be acted as a just drama. But as few men have the happiness to begin and finish any new project, so neither did he live to make his design perfect: There wanted the fulness of a plot, and the variety of characters to form it as it ought; and, perhaps, something might have been added to the beauty of the style. All which he would have performed with more exactness, had he pleased to have given us another work of the same nature. For myself and others, who come after him, we are bound, with all veneration to his memory, to acknowledge what advantage we received from that excellent groundwork which he laid: And, since it is an easy thing to add to what already is invented, we ought all of us, without envy to him, or partiality to ourselves, to yield him the precedence in it.

Having done him this justice, as my guide, I may do myself so much, as to give an account of what I have performed after him. I observed then, as I said, what was wanting to the perfection of his "Siege of Rhodes;" which was design, and variety of characters. And in the midst of this consideration, by mere accident, I opened the next book that lay by me, which was an Ariosto in Italian; and the very first two lines of that poem gave me light to all I could desire:

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Le donne, i cavalier, l'arme, gli amori,
Le cortesie, l'audaci imprese io canto, etc.

For the very next reflection which I made was this, that an heroic play ought to be an imitation, in little, of an heroic poem; and, consequently, that love and valour ought to be the subject of it. Both these Sir William Davenant had begun to shadow; but it was so, as first discoverers draw their maps, with headlands, and promontories, and some few outlines of somewhat taken at a distance, and which the designer saw not clearly. The common drama obliged him to a plot well formed and pleasant, or, as the ancients call it, one entire and great action. But this he afforded not himself in a story, which he neither filled with persons, nor beautified with characters, nor varied with accidents. The laws of an heroic poem did not dispense with those of the other, but raised them to a greater height, and indulged him a further liberty of fancy, and of drawing all things as far above the ordinary proportion of the stage, as that is beyond the common words and actions of human life; and, therefore, in the scanting of his images and design, he complied not enough with the greatness and majesty of an heroic poem.

I am sorry I cannot discover my opinion of this kind of writing, without dissenting much from his, whose memory I love and honour. But I will do it with the same respect to him, as if he were now alive, and overlooking my paper while I write. His judgment of an heroic poem was this: "That it ought to be dressed in a more familiar and easy shape; more fitted to the common actions and passions of human life; and, in short, more like a glass of nature, showing us ourselves in our ordinary habits, and figuring a

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more practicable virtue to us, than was done by the ancients or moderns." Thus he takes the image of an heroic poem from the drama, or stage poetry; and accordingly intended to divide it into five books, representing the same number of acts; and every book into several cantos, imitating the scenes which compose our acts.

But this, I think, is rather a play in narration, as I may call it, than an heroic poem. If at least you will not prefer the opinion of a single man to the practice of the most excellent authors, both of ancient and latter ages. I am no admirer of quotations; but you shall hear, if you please, one of the ancients delivering his judgment on this question; it is Petronius Arbiter, the most elegant, and one of the most judicious authors of the Latin tongue; who, after he had given many admirable rules for the structure and beauties of an epic poem, concludes all in these following words:—

"*Non enim res gestæ versibus comprehendendæ sunt, quod longe melius historici faciunt: sed, per ambages, deorumque ministeria, præcipitandus est liber spiritus, ut potius furentis animi vaticinatio appareat, quam religiosæ orationis, sub testibus, fides.*"

In which sentence, and his own essay of a poem, which immediately he gives you, it is thought he taxes Lucan, who followed too much the truth of history, crowded sentences together, was too full of points, and too often offered at somewhat which had more of the sting of an epigram, than of the dignity and state of an heroic poem. Lucan used not much the help of his heathen deities: There was neither the ministry of the gods, nor the precipitation of the soul, nor the fury of a prophet (of which my

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author speaks), in his *Pharsalia;* he treats you more like a philosopher than a poet, and instructs you in verse, with what he had been taught by his uncle Seneca in prose. In one word, he walks soberly afoot, when he might fly. Yet Lucan is not always this religious historian. The oracle of Appius, and the witchcraft of Erictho, will somewhat atone for him, who was, indeed, bound up by an ill-chosen and known argument, to follow truth with great exactness. For my part, I am of opinion, that neither Homer, Virgil, Statius, Ariosto, Tasso, nor our English Spenser, could have formed their poems half so beautiful, without those gods and spirits, and those enthusiastic parts of poetry, which compose the most noble parts of all their writings. And I will ask any man who loves heroic poetry (for I will not dispute their tastes who do not), if the ghost of Polydorus in Virgil, the Enchanted Wood in Tasso, and the Bower of Bliss in Spenser (which he borrows from that admirable Italian) could have been omitted, without taking from their works some of the greatest beauties in them. And if any man object the improbabilities of a spirit appearing, or of a palace raised by magic; I boldly answer him, that an heroic poet is not tied to a bare representation of what is true, or exceeding probable; but that he may let himself loose to visionary objects, and to the representation of such things, as, depending not on sense, and therefore not to be comprehended by knowledge, may give him a freer scope for imagination. It is enough that, in all ages and religions, the greatest part of mankind have believed the power of magic, and that there are spirits or spectres which have appeared. This, I say, is foundation enough for poetry; and I dare

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further affirm, that the whole doctrine of separated beings, whether those spirits are incorporeal substances (which Mr. Hobbes, with some reason, thinks to imply a contradiction), or that they are a thinner or more aërial sort of bodies (as some of the fathers have conjectured), may better be explicated by poets than by philosophers or divines. For their speculations on this subject are wholly poetical; they have only their fancy for their guide; and that, being sharper in an excellent poet, than it is likely it should in a phlegmatic, heavy gownman, will see further in its own empire, and produce more satisfactory notions on those dark and doubtful problems.

Some men think they have raised a great argument against the use of spectres and magic in heroic poetry, by saying they are unnatural; but whether they or I believe there are such things, is not material; it is enough that, for aught we know, they may be in nature; and whatever is, or may be, is not properly unnatural. Neither am I much concerned at Mr. Cowley's verses before "Gondibert," though his authority is almost sacred to me: It is true, he has resembled the epic poetry to a fantastic fairy-land; but he has contradicted himself by his own example: For he has himself made use of angels and visions in his "Davideis," as well as Tasso in his "Godfrey."

What I have written on this subject will not be thought a digression by the reader, if he please to remember what I said in the beginning of this essay, that I have modelled my heroic plays by the rules of an heroic poem. And if that be the most noble, the most pleasant, and the most instructive way of writing in verse, and withal the highest pattern of human life, as all

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poets have agreed, I shall need no other argument to justify my choice in this imitation. One advantage the drama has above the other, namely, that it represents to view what the poem only does relate; and, *Segnius irritant animum demissa per aures, quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus*, as Horace tells us.

To those who object my frequent use of drums and trumpets, and my representations of battles, I answer, I introduced them not on the English stage: Shakespeare used them frequently; and though Jonson shows no battle in his "Catiline," yet you hear from behind the scenes the sounding of trumpets, and the shouts of fighting armies. But, I add further, that these warlike instruments, and even their presentations of fighting on the stage, are no more than necessary to produce the effects of an heroic play; that is, to raise the imagination of the audience, and to persuade them, for the time, that what they behold on the theatre is really performed. The poet is then to endeavour an absolute dominion over the minds of the spectators; for, though our fancy will contribute to its own deceit, yet a writer ought to help its operation: And that the Red Bull* has formerly done the same, is no more an argument against our practice, than it would be for a physician to forbear an approved medicine, because a mountebank has used it with success.

Thus I have given a short account of heroic plays. I might now, with the usual eagerness of an author, make a particular defence of this.

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* [It is sufficient to remind the reader that the Red Bull was one of the early theatres. It seems to have acquired a somewhat "transpontine" reputation.—Ed.]

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But the common opinion (how unjust soever) has been so much to my advantage, that I have reason to be satisfied, and to suffer with patience all that can be urged against it.

For, otherwise, what can be more easy for me, than to defend the character of Almanzor, which is one great exception that is made against the play? 'Tis said, that Almanzor is no perfect pattern of heroic virtue, that he is a contemner of kings, and that he is made to perform impossibilities.

I must therefore avow, in the first place, from whence I took the character. The first image I had of him, was from the Achilles of Homer; the next from Tasso's Rinaldo (who was a copy of the former), and the third from the Artaban of Monsieur Calprenède,* who has imitated both. The original of these, Achilles, is taken by Homer for his hero; and is described by him as one, who in strength and courage surpassed the rest of the Grecian army; but withal of so fiery a temper, so impatient of an injury, even from his king and general, that when his mistress was to be forced from him by the command of Agamemnon, he not only disobeyed it, but returned him an answer full of contumely, and in the most opprobrious terms he could imagine; they are Homer's words which follow, and I have cited but some few amongst a multitude:

Οἰνοβαρὲς, κυνὸς ὄμματ' ἔχων, κραδίην δ' ἐλάφοιο.
Il. α. v. 225.

Δημοβόρος βασιλεύς, etc.—Il. α. v. 231.

* [Gautier de Coste, Seigneur de la Calprenède (1610-1663) was equally famous for his gasconades (see Tallemant des Réaux, viii. 200-207) and his novels (*Cassandre*, *Cléopatre*, *Pharamond*). He ranks with Gomberville and Mlle. de Scudéry as a writer of heroic romance.—Ed.]

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Nay, he proceeded so far in his insolence, as to draw out his sword, with intention to kill him;

Ἕλκετο δ' ἐκ κολεοῖο μέγα ξίφος.—Il. α. v. 194.

And, if Minerva had not appeared, and held his hand, he had executed his design; and it was all she could do to dissuade him from it. The event was, that he left the army, and would fight no more. Agamemnon gives his character thus to Nestor:

Ἀλλ' ὅδ' ἀνὴρ ἐθέλει περὶ πάντων ἔμμεναι ἄλλων,
Πάντων μὲν κρατέειν ἐθέλει, πάντεσσι δ' ἀνάσσειν.
Il. α. v. 287, 288.

and Horace gives the same description of him in his Art of Poetry:

Honoratum si fortè reponis Achillem,
Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer,
Jura neget sibi nata, nihil non arroget armis.

Tasso's chief character, Rinaldo, was a man of the same temper; for, when he had slain Gernando in his heat of passion, he not only refused to be judged by Godfrey, his general, but threatened that if he came to seize him, he would right himself by arms upon him; witness these following lines of Tasso:

Vegga egli, o mandi, io terrò fermo il piede:
Giudici fian tra noi la sorte, e l'arme;
Fera tragedia vuol che s'appresenti,
Per lor diporto, alle nemiche genti.

You see how little these great authors did esteem the point of honour, so much magnified by the French, and so ridiculously aped by us. They made their heroes men of honour; but so as not to divest them quite of human passions and frailties: they contented themselves to show

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you, what men of great spirits would certainly do when they were provoked, not what they were obliged to do by the strict rules of moral virtue. For my own part, I declare myself for Homer and Tasso, and am more in love with Achilles and Rinaldo, than with Cyrus and Oroondates. I shall never subject my characters to the French standard, where love and honour are to be weighed by drachms and scruples: Yet, where I have designed the patterns of exact virtues, such as in this play are the parts of Almahide, of Ozmyn, and Benzayda, I may safely challenge the best of theirs.

But Almanzor is taxed with changing sides: and what tie has he on him to the contrary? He is not born their subject whom he serves, and he is injured by them to a very high degree. He threatens them, and speaks insolently of sovereign power; but so do Achilles and Rinaldo, who were subjects and soldiers to Agamemnon and Godfrey of Bulloigne. He talks extravagantly in his passion; but, if I would take the pains to quote an hundred passages of Ben Jonson's Cethegus, I could easily show you, that the rodomontades of Almanzor are neither so irrational as his, nor so impossible to be put in execution; for Cethegus threatens to destroy nature, and to raise a new one out of it; to kill all the senate for his part of the action; to look Cato dead; and a thousand other things as extravagant he says, but performs not one action in the play.

But none of the former calumnies will stick; and, therefore, it is at last charged upon me, that Almanzor does all things; or if you will have an absurd accusation, in their nonsense who make it, that he performs impossibilities: they say, that being a stranger, he appeases two fighting

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factions, when the authority of their lawful sovereign could not. This is indeed the most improbable of all his actions, but it is far from being impossible. Their king had made himself contemptible to his people, as the history of Granada tells us; and Almanzor, though a stranger, yet was already known to them by his gallantry in the Juego de toros, his engagement on the weaker side, and more especially by the character of his person and brave actions, given by Abdalla just before; and, after all, the greatness of the enterprise consisted only in the daring, for he had the king's guards to second him: But we have read both of Cæsar, and many other generals, who have not only calmed a mutiny with a word, but have presented themselves single before an army of their enemies; which upon sight of them has revolted from their own leaders and come over to their trenches. In the rest of Almanzor's actions you see him for the most part victorious; but the same fortune has constantly attended many heroes, who were not imaginary. Yet, you see it no inheritance to him; for, in the first place, he is made a prisoner; and, in the last, defeated, and not able to preserve the city from being taken. If the history of the late Duke of Guise* be true, he hazarded more, and performed not less in Naples, than Almanzor is feigned to have done in Granada.

I have been too tedious in this apology; but to make some satisfaction, I will leave the rest of my play exposed to the critics, without defence.

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* [Henri II., fifth Duke of Guise, born 1614, died 1664. See his memoirs in Michaud and Poujoulat's Collection, vol. xxxi. This affair was the sequel of the Masaniello revolt, and was the last exploit of his famous house.—ED.]

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The concernment of it is wholly passed from me, and ought to be in them who have been favourable to it, and are somewhat obliged to defend their own opinions. That there are errors in it, I deny not;

Ast opere in tanto fas est obrepere somnum.

But I have already swept the stakes: and, with the common good fortune of prosperous gamesters, can be content to sit quietly; to hear my fortune cursed by some, and my faults arraigned by others; and to suffer both without reply.

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ON

MR. DRYDEN'S PLAY,

THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

The applause I gave among the foolish crowd
Was not distinguished, though I clapped aloud:
Or, if it had, my judgment had been hid:
I clapped for company, as others did.
Thence may be told the fortune of your play,
Its goodness must be tried another way.
Let 's judge it then, and, if we 've any skill,
Commend what 's good, though we commend it ill.
There will be praise enough; yet not so much,
As if the world had never any such:
Ben Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, Shakespeare, are,
As well as you, to have a poet's share.
You, who write after, have, besides, this curse,
You must write better, or you else write worse.
To equal only what was writ before,
Seems stolen, or borrowed from the former store.
Though blind as Homer, all the ancients be,
'Tis on their shoulders, like the lame, we see.
Then not to flatter th' age, nor flatter you,
(Praises, though less, are greater when they 're true,)
You're equal to the best, out-done by you;
Who had out-done themselves, had they lived now.

VAUGHAN.*

* John, Lord Vaughan, eldest surviving son of Richard, Earl of Carbery.

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PROLOGUE

TO THE FIRST PART,

SPOKEN BY

MRS. ELLEN GWYN,

IN A BROAD-BRIMMED HAT, AND WAIST-BELT.*

This jest was first of the other house's making,
And, five times tried, has never failed of taking;
For 'twere a shame a poet should be killed
Under the shelter of so broad a shield.
This is that hat, whose very sight did win ye
To laugh and clap as though the devil were in ye.
As then, for Nokes,† so now I hope you 'll be
So dull, to laugh once more for love of me.
I'll write a play, says one, for I have got
A broad-brimmed hat, and waist-belt, towards a plot.
Says the other, I have one more large than that.
Thus they out-write each other with a hat!
The brims still grew with every play they writ;
And grew so large, they covered all the wit.
Hat was the play; 'twas language, wit, and tale:
Like them that find meat, drink, and cloth in ale.
What dulness do these mongrel wits confess,
When all their hope is acting of a dress!
Thus, two ‡ the best comedians of the age
Must be worn out, with being blocks o' the stage;
Like a young girl, who better things has known,
Beneath their poet's impotence they groan.
See now what charity it was to save!
They thought you liked, what only you forgave;

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* There is a vague tradition, that, in this grotesque dress (for the brims of the hat were as broad a cart-wheel), Nell Gwyn had the good fortune first to attract the attention of her royal lover. Where the jest lay is difficult to discover: it seems to have originated with the Duke of York's players. [The attraction was earlier. See epilogue to "Tyrannic Love." The dress is said to have been begun by Nokes as a caricature of French attire when Henrietta of Orleans visited England in May 1670. If so, the date of the acting must be later, for which there is the additional argument of Nell's confinement in the same month.—Ed.]

† [The actor.—Ed.]

‡ [Who was the second?—Ed.]

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ALMANZOR AND ALMAHIDE,

OR, THE

CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

THE FIRST PART.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter BOABDELIN, ABENAMAR, ABDELMELECH, *and Guards.*

Boab. Thus, in the triumphs of soft peace, I reign;
And, from my walls, defy the powers of Spain;
With pomp and sports my love I celebrate,
While they keep distance, and attend my state.—
Parent to her, whose eyes my soul enthral,
[*To* ABEN.
Whom I, in hope, already father call,
Abenamar, thy youth these sports has known,
Of which thy age is now spectator grown;
Judge-like thou sit'st, to praise, or to arraign
The flying skirmish of the darted cane:*

* [The "juego de cañas" or djereed.—ED.]

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But, when fierce bulls run loose upon the place,
And our bold Moors their loves with danger grace,
Then heat new-bends thy slacken'd nerves again,
And a short youth runs warm through every vein.

Aben. I must confess the encounters of this day
Warmed me indeed, but quite another way,—
Not with the fire of youth; but generous rage,
To see the glories of my youthful age
So far out-done.

Abdelm. Castile could never boast, in all its pride,
A pomp so splendid, when the lists, set wide,
Gave room to the fierce bulls, which wildly ran
In Sierra Ronda, ere the war began;
Who, with high nostrils snuffing up the wind,
Now stood the champions of the savage kind.
Just opposite, within the circled place,
Ten of our bold Abencerrages' race
(Each brandishing his bull-spear in his hand)
Did their proud jennets gracefully command.
On their steel'd heads their demi-lances wore
Small pennons, which their ladies' colours bore.
Before this troop did warlike Ozmyn go;
Each lady, as he rode, saluting low;
At the chief stands, with reverence more profound,
His well-taught courser, kneeling, touched the ground;
Thence raised, he sidelong bore his rider on,
Still facing, till he out of sight was gone.

Boab. You praise him like a friend; and I confess,
His brave deportment merited no less.

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Abdelm. Nine bulls were launched* by his victorious arm,
Whose wary jennet, shunning still the harm,
Seemed to attend the shock, and then leaped wide:
Meanwhile, his dext'rous rider, when he spied
The beast just stooping, 'twixt the neck and head
His lance, with never-erring fury, sped.
Aben. My son did well, and so did Hamet too;
Yet did no more than we were wont to do;
But what the stranger did was more than man.
Abdelm. He finished all those triumphs we began.
One bull, with curled black head, beyond the rest,
And dew-laps hanging from his brawny chest,
With nodding front a while did daring stand,
And with his jetty hoof spurned back the sand;
Then, leaping forth, he bellowed out aloud:
The amazed assistants back each other crowd,
While monarch-like he ranged the listed field;
Some tossed, some gored, some trampling down he killed.
The ignobler Moors from far his rage provoke
With woods of darts, which from his sides he shook.
Meantime your valiant son, who had before
Gained fame, rode round to every Mirador;†
Beneath each lady's stand a stop he made,
And, bowing, took the applauses which they paid,
Just in that point of time, the brave unknown
Approached the lists.

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* [In the sense of "lanced."—Ed.]

† [*Mirador*, a parapeted balcony, or rather look-out, usual in Hispano-Mauresque houses.—Ed.]

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Boab. I marked him, when alone
(Observed by all, himself observing none)
He entered first, and with a graceful pride
His fiery Arab dextrously did guide,
Who while his rider every stand surveyed,
Sprung loose, and flew into an escapade;*
Not moving forward, yet, with every bound,
Pressing, and seeming still to quit his ground.
What after passed
Was far from the Ventanna† where I sate,
But you were near, and can the truth relate.
[*To* ABDELM.

Abdelm. Thus while he stood, the bull, who saw his foe,
His easier conquests proudly did forego;
And, making at him with a furious bound,
From his bent forehead aimed a double wound.
A rising murmur ran through all the field,
And every lady's blood with fear was chilled:
Some shrieked, while others, with more helpful care,
Cried out aloud,—Beware, brave youth, beware!
At this he turned, and, as the bull drew near,
Shunned and received him on his pointed spear:
The lance broke short, the beast then bellowed loud,
And his strong neck to a new onset bowed.
The undaunted youth
Then drew; and from his saddle bending low,
Just where the neck did to the shoulders grow,
With his full force discharged a deadly blow.
Not heads of poppies (when they reap the grain)
Fall with more ease before the labouring swain,
Than fell this head:

* [In its proper sense—"fling," "kick."—ED.]
† [*Ventanna*, or rather "Ventaña," a window.—ED.]

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It fell so quick, it did even death prevent,
And made imperfect bellowings as it went.
Then all the trumpets victory did sound,
And yet their clangours in our shouts were drown'd. [*A confused noise within.*

Boab. The alarm-bell rings from our Alhambra walls,
And from the streets sound drums and atabals.*
[*Within, a bell, drums, and trumpets.*

Enter a Messenger.

How now? from whence proceed these new alarms?

Mess. The two fierce factions are again in arms;
And changing into blood the day's delight,
The Zegrys with the Abencerrages fight;
On each side their allies and friends appear;
The Macas here, the Alabezes there:
The Gazuls with the Bencerrages join,
And, with the Zegrys, all great Gomel's line.

Boab. Draw up behind the Vivarambla place;
Double my guards,—these factions I will face;
And try if all the fury they can bring,
Be proof against the presence of their king.
[*Exit* BOAB.

The Factions appear: At the head of the Abencerrages, OZMYN; *at the head of the Zegrys,* ZULEMA, HAMET, GOMEL, *and* SELIN: ABENAMAR *and* ABDELMELECH, *joined with the Abencerrages.*

Zul. The faint Abencerrages quit their ground:
Press them; put home your thrusts to every wound.

* [Kettle-drums.—ED.]

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Abdelm. Zegry, on manly force our line relies;
Thine poorly takes the advantage of surprise:
Unarmed and much out-numbered we retreat;
You gain no fame, when ~~basely you defeat.~~
If thou art brave, seek nobler victory;
Save Moorish blood; and, while our bands stand by,
Let two and two an equal combat try.
Ham. 'Tis not for fear the combat we refuse,
But we our gained advantage will not lose.
Zul. In combating, but two of you will fall;
And we resolve we will despatch you all.
Ozm. We'll double yet the exchange before we die,
And each of ours two lives of yours shall buy.

ALMANZOR *enters betwixt them, as they stand ready to engage.*

Alm. I cannot stay to ask which cause is best;
But this is so to me, because opprest.
[*Goes to the Aben.*

To them BOABDELIN *and his guards, going betwixt them.*

Boab. On your allegiance, I command you stay;
Who passes here, through me must make his way;
My life's the Isthmus; through this narrow line
You first must cut, before those seas can join.
What fury, Zegrys, has possessed your minds?
What rage the brave Abencerrages blinds?
If of your courage you new proofs would show,
Without much travel you may find a foe.
Those foes are neither so remote nor few,
That you should need each other to pursue.

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Lean times and foreign wars should minds unite;
When poor men mutter, but they seldom fight.
O holy Allah! that I live to see
Thy Granadines assist their enemy!
You fight the Christians' battles; every life
You lavish thus, in this intestine strife,
Does from our weak foundations take one prop,
Which helped to hold our sinking country up.
Ozm. 'Tis fit our private enmity should cease;
Though injured first, yet I will first seek peace.
Zul. No, murderer, no; I never will be won
To peace with him, whose hand has slain my son.
Ozm. Our prophet's curse
On me, and all the Abencerrages light,
If, unprovoked, I with your son did fight.
Abdelm. A band of Zegrys ran within the place,
Matched with a troop of thirty of our race.
Your son and Ozmyn the first squadrons led,
Which, ten by ten, like Parthians, charged and fled,
The ground was strowed with canes where we did meet,
Which crackled underneath our coursers' feet:
When Tarifa (I saw him ride apart)
Changed his blunt cane for a steel-pointed dart,
And, meeting Ozmyn next,——
Who wanted time for treason to provide,——
He basely threw it at him, undefied.
Ozm. [*Showing his arms.*] Witness this blood—which when by treason sought,
That followed, sir, which to myself I ought.
Zul. His hate to thee was grounded on a grudge,
Which all our generous Zegrys just did judge:
Thy villain-blood thou openly didst place
Above the purple of our kingly race.

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Boab. From equal stems their blood both houses draw,
They from Morocco, you from Cordova.
Ham. Their mongrel race is mixed with Christian breed;
Hence 'tis that they those dogs in prisons feed.
Abdelm. Our holy prophet wills, that charity
Should even to birds and beasts extended be:
None knows what fate is for himself designed;
The thought of human chance should make us kind.
Gom. We waste that time we to revenge should give:
Fall on: let no Abencerrago live.
[*Advancing before the rest of his party.*
ALMANZOR, *advancing on the other side, and describing a line with his sword,*
Almanz. Upon thy life pass not this middle space;
Sure death stands guarding the forbidden place.
Gom. To dare that death, I will approach yet nigher;
Thus,—wert thou compassed in with circling fire.
[*They fight.*
Boab. Disarm them both; if they resist you, kill.
[ALMANZOR, *in the midst of the guards, kills* GOMEL, *and then is disarmed.*
Almanz. Now you have but the leavings of my will.
Boab. Kill him! this insolent unknown shall fall,
And be the victim to atone you all.
Ozm. If he must die, not one of us will live:
That life he gave for us, for him we give.
Boab. It was a traitor's voice that spoke those words;
So are you all, who do not sheathe your swords.

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Zul. Outrage unpunished, when a prince is by,
Forfeits to scorn the rights of majesty:
No subject his protection can expect,
Who what he owes himself does first neglect.
Aben. This stranger, sir, is he,
Who lately in the Vivarambla place
Did, with so loud applause, your triumphs grace.
Boab. The word which I have given, I 'll not revoke;
If he be brave, he 's ready for the stroke.
Almanz. No man has more contempt than I of breath,
But whence hast thou the right to give me death?
Obeyed as sovereign by thy subjects be,
But know, that I alone am king of me.
I am as free as nature first made man,
Ere the base laws of servitude began,
When wild in woods the noble savage ran.
Boab. Since, then, no power above your own you know,
Mankind should use you like a common foe;
You should be hunted like a beast of prey:
By your own law I take your life away.
Almanz. My laws are made but only for my sake;
No king against himself a law can make.
If thou pretend'st to be a prince like me,
Blame not an act, which should thy pattern be.
I saw the oppressed, and thought it did belong
To a king's office to redress the wrong:
I brought that succour, which thou ought'st to bring,
And so, in nature, am thy subjects' king.
Boab. I do not want your counsel to direct,
Or aid to help me punish or protect.

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Almanz. Thou want'st them both, or better thou wouldst know,
Than to let factions in thy kingdom grow.
Divided interests, while thou think'st to sway,
Draw, like two brooks, thy middle stream away:
For though they band and jar, yet both combine
To make their greatness by the fall of thine.
Thus, like a buckler, thou art held in sight,
While they behind thee with each other fight.

Boab. Away, and execute him instantly! [*To his Guards.*

Almanz. Stand off; I have not leisure yet to die.

To them, enter ABDALLA *hastily.*

Abdal. Hold, sir! for heaven's sake hold!
Defer this noble stranger's punishment,
Or your rash orders you will soon repent.

Boab. Brother, you know not yet his insolence.

Abdal. Upon yourself you punish his offence:
If we treat gallant strangers in this sort,
Mankind will shun the inhospitable court;
And who, henceforth, to our defence will come,
If death must be the brave Almanzor's doom?
From Africa I drew him to your aid,
And for his succour have his life betrayed.

Boab. Is this the Almanzor whom at Fez you knew,
When first their swords the Xeriff* brothers drew?

Abdal. This, sir, is he, who for the elder fought,
And to the juster cause the conquest brought;
Till the proud Santo,† seated on the throne,
Disdained the service he had done to own:

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* [The still reigning royal family of Morocco.—ED.]
† [More usually "Santon."—ED.]

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Then to the vanquished part his fate he led;
The vanquished triumphed, and the victor fled.
Vast is his courage, boundless is his mind,
Rough as a storm, and humorous as wind:
Honour 's the only idol of his eyes;
The charms of beauty like a pest he flies;
And, raised by valour from a birth unknown,
Acknowledges no power above his own.

[BOABDELIN *coming to* ALMANZOR.

Boab. Impute your danger to our ignorance;
The bravest men are subject most to chance:
Granada much does to your kindness owe;
But towns, expecting sieges, cannot show
More honour, than to invite you to a foe.

Almanz. I do not doubt but I have been to blame:
But, to pursue the end for which I came,
Unite your subjects first; then let us go,
And pour their common rage upon the foe.

Boab. [*to the Factions.*] Lay down your arms, and let me beg you cease
Your enmities.

Zul. We will not hear of peace,
Till we by force have first revenged our slain.

Abdelm. The action we have done we will maintain.

Selin. Then let the king depart, and we will try
Our cause by arms.

Zul. For us and victory.

Boab. A king entreats you.

Almanz. What subjects will precarious* kings regard?
A beggar speaks too softly to be heard:

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* [The word seems here to be used not in its usual sense of "dependent on the will of another," but in the sense of "supplicating."—ED.]

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Lay down your arms! 'tis I command you now.
Do it—or, by our prophet's soul I vow,
My hands shall right your king on him I seize.
Now let me see whose look but disobeys.
All. Long live king Mahomet Boabdelin!
Almanz. No more; but hushed as midnight silence go:
He will not have your acclamations now.
Hence, you unthinking crowd!—
[*The Common People go off on both parties.*
Empire, thou poor and despicable thing,
When such as these make or unmake a king!
Abdal. How much of virtue lies in one great soul, [*Embracing him.*
Whose single force can multitudes control!
[*A trumpet within.*

Enter a Messenger.

Messen. The Duke of Arcos, sir,
Does with a trumpet from the foe appear.
Boab. Attend him; he shall have his audience here.

Enter the Duke of Arcos.

D. Arcos. The monarchs of Castile and Arragon
Have sent me to you, to demand this town,
To which their just and rightful claim is known.
Boab. Tell Ferdinand, my right to it appears
By long possession of eight hundred years:
When first my ancestors from Afric sailed,
In Rodrique's death your Gothic title failed.
D. Arcos. The successors of Rodrique still remain,
And ever since have held some part of Spain:
Even in the midst of your victorious powers,
The Asturias, and all Portugal, were ours.

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You have no right, except you force allow;
And if yours then was just, so ours is now.
Boab. 'Tis true from force the noblest title springs;
I therefore hold from that, which first made kings.
D. Arcos. Since then by force you prove your title true,
Ours must be just, because we claim from you.
When with your father you did jointly reign,
Invading with your Moors the south of Spain,
I, who that day the Christians did command,
Then took, and brought you bound to Ferdinand.
Boab. I 'll hear no more; defer what you would say:
In private we 'll discourse some other day.
D. Arcos. Sir, you shall hear, however you are loth,
That, like a perjured prince, you broke your oath:
To gain your freedom you a contract signed,
By which your crown you to my king resigned,
From thenceforth as his vassal holding it,
And paying tribute such as he thought fit;
Contracting, when your father came to die,
To lay aside all marks of royalty,
And at Purchena privately to live,
Which in exchange, king Ferdinand did give.
Boab. The force used on me made that contract void.
D. Arcos. Why have you then its benefits enjoyed?
By it you had not only freedom then,
But, since, had aid of money and of men;
And, when Granada for your uncle held,
You were by us restored, and he expelled.
Since that, in peace we let you reap your grain,
Recalled our troops, that used to beat your plain;
And more——

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Almanz. Yes, yes, you did with wondrous care,
Against his rebels prosecute the war,
While he secure in your protection slept;
For him you took, but for yourselves you kept.
Thus, as some fawning usurer does feed,
With present sums, the unwary unthrift's need,
You sold your kindness at a boundless rate,
And then o'erpaid the debt from his estate;
Which, mouldering piecemeal, in your hands did fall
Till now at last you came to swoop it all.

D. Arcos. The wrong you do my king I cannot bear;
Whose kindness you would odiously compare.—
The estate was his; which, yet since you deny,
He 's now content, in his own wrong, to buy.

Almanz. And he shall buy it dear! What his he calls,
We will not give one stone from out these walls.

Boab. Take this for answer, then,——
Whate'er your arms have conquered of my land,
I will, for peace, resign to Ferdinand.—
To harder terms my mind I cannot bring;
But, as I still have lived, will die a king.

D. Arcos. Since thus you have resolved, henceforth prepare
For all the last extremities of war:
My king his hope from heaven's assistance draws.

Almanz. The Moors have heaven, and me, to assist their cause. [*Exit* Arcos.

Enter Esperanza.

Esper. Fair Almahide,
(Who did with weeping eyes these discords see,
And fears the omen may unlucky be,)

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Prepares a zambra* to be danced this night,
In hope soft pleasures may your minds unite.
Boab. My mistress gently chides the fault I made:
But tedious business has my love delayed,—
Business, which dares the joys of kings invade.
Almanz. First let us sally out, and meet the foe.
Abdal. Led on by you, we on to triumph go.
Boab. Then with the day let war and tumult cease;
The night be sacred to our love and peace:
'Tis just some joys on weary kings should wait;
'Tis all we gain by being slaves to state.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter ABDALLA, ABDELMELECH, OZMYN, ZULEMA, *and* HAMET, *as returning from the sally.*

Abdal. This happy day does to Granada bring
A lasting peace, and triumphs to the king!—
The two fierce factions will no longer jar,
Since they have now been brothers in the war.
Those who, apart, in emulation fought,
The common danger to one body brought;
And, to his cost, the proud Castilian finds
Our Moorish courage in united minds.
Abdelm. Since to each other's aid our lives we owe,
Lose we the name of faction, and of foe;
Which I to Zulema can bear no more,
Since Lyndaraxa's beauty I adore.
Zul. I am obliged to Lyndaraxa's charms,
Which gain the conquest I should lose by arms;

* [A Moorish dance.—ED.]

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And wish my sister may continue fair,
That I may keep a good,
Of whose possession I should else despair.
Ozm. While we indulge our common happiness,
He is forgot, by whom we all possess;
The brave Almanzor, to whose arms we owe
All that we did, and all that we shall do;
Who, like a tempest, that outrides the wind,
Made a just battle ere the bodies joined.
Abdelm. His victories we scarce could keep in view,
Or polish them so fast as he rough-drew.
Abdal. Fate, after him, below with pain did move,
And victory could scarce keep pace above:
Death did at length so many slain forget,
And lost the tale, and took them by the great.*

Enter ALMANZOR *with the Duke of* ARCOS, *prisoner.*

Hamet. See, here he comes,
And leads in triumph him, who did command
The vanquished army of king Ferdinand.
Almanz. [*To the Duke.*] Thus far your master's arms a fortune find
Below the swelled ambition of his mind;
And Allah shuts a misbeliever's reign
From out the best and goodliest part of Spain.
Let Ferdinand Calabrian conquests make,
And from the French contested Milan take;
Let him new worlds discover to the old,
And break up shining mountains, big with gold;
Yet he shall find this small domestic foe,
Still sharp and pointed, to his bosom grow.

* ["Wholesale," "in bulk."—ED.]

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D. Arcos. Of small advantages too much you boast;
You beat the out-guards of my master's host:
This little loss, in our vast body, shows
So small, that half have never heard the news.
Fame's out of breath, ere she can fly so far,
To tell them all, that you have e'er made war.
Almanz. It pleases me your army is so great;
For now I know there 's more to conquer yet.
By heaven! I 'll see what troops you have behind:
I 'll face this storm, that thickens in the wind;
And, with bent forehead, full against it go,
'Till I have found the last and utmost foe.
D. Arcos. Believe, you shall not long attend in vain:
To-morrow's dawn shall cover all the plain;
Bright arms shall flash upon you from afar,
A wood of lances, and a moving war.
But I, unhappy, in my bonds, must yet
Be only pleased to hear of your defeat,
And with a slave's inglorious ease remain,
'Till conquering Ferdinand has broke my chain.
Almanz. Vain man, thy hopes of Ferdinand are weak!
I hold thy chain too fast for him to break.
But, since thou threaten'st us, I'll set thee free,
That I again may fight, and conquer thee.
D. Arcos. Old as I am, I take thee at thy word,
And will to-morrow thank thee with my sword.
Almanz. I 'll go, and instantly acquaint the king,
And sudden orders for thy freedom bring,
Thou canst not be so pleased at liberty
As I shall be to find thou darest be free.
[*Exeunt* ALMANZOR, ARCOS, *and the rest, excepting only* ABDALLA *and* ZULEMA.

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Abdal. Of all those Christians who infest this town,
This Duke of Arcos is of most renown.
Zul. Oft have I heard, that in your father's reign,
His bold adventurers beat the neighbouring plain;
Then under Ponce Leon's name he fought,
And from our triumphs* many prizes brought;
Till in disgrace from Spain at length he went,
And since continued in long banishment.
Abdal. But, see, your beauteous sister does appear.

Enter LYNDARAXA.

Zul. By my desire she came to find me here.
[ZULEMA *and* LYNDARAXA *whisper; then* ZUL. *goes out, and* LYNDAR. *is going after.*
Abdal. Why, fairest Lyndaraxa, do you fly
[*Staying her.*
A prince, who at your feet is proud to die?
Lyndar. Sir, I should blush to own so rude a thing, [*Staying.*
As 'tis to shun the brother of my king.
Abdal. In my hard fortune, I some ease should find,
Did your disdain extend to all mankind.
But give me leave to grieve, and to complain,
That you give others what I beg in vain.
Lyndar. Take my esteem, if you on that can live;
For, frankly, sir, 'tis all I have to give:
If from my heart you ask or hope for more,
I grieve the place is taken up before.

* [*i.e.* "triumphs over us."—ED.]

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Abdal. My rival merits you.—
To Abdelmelech I will justice do;
For he wants worth, who dares not praise a foe.
Lyndar. That for his virtue, sir, you make defence,
Shows in your own a noble confidence.
But him defending, and excusing me,
I know not what can your advantage be.
Abdal. I fain would ask, ere I proceed in this,
If, as by choice, you are by promise his?
Lyndar. The engagement only in my love does lie,
But that 's a knot which you can ne'er untie.
Abdal. When cities are besieged, and treat to yield,
If there appear relievers from the field,
The flag of parley may be taken down,
Till the success of those without is known.
Lyndar. Though Abdelmelech has not yet possest,
Yet I have sealed the treaty in* my breast.
Abdal. Your treaty has not tied you to a day;
Some chance might break it, would you but delay.
If I can judge the secrets of your heart,
Ambition in it has the greatest part;
And wisdom, then, will show some difference
Betwixt a private person and a prince.
Lyndar. Princes are subjects still:—
Subject and subject can small difference bring:
The difference is 'twixt subjects and a king.
And since, sir, you are none, your hopes remove;
For less than empire I 'll not change my love.
Abdal. Had I a crown, all I should prize in it,
Should be the power to lay it at your feet.

* [1st edition "for," which seems unlikely.—Ed.]

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Lyndar. Had you that crown, which you but wish, not hope,
Then, I, perhaps, might stoop, and take it up.
But till your wishes and your hopes agree,
You shall be still a private man with me.
Abdal. If I am king, and if my brother die,—
Lyndar. Two ifs scarce make one possibility.
Abdal. The rule of happiness by reason scan;
You may be happy with a private man.
Lyndar. That happiness I may enjoy, 'tis true;
But then that private man must not be you.
Where'er I love, I 'm happy in my choice;
If I make you so, you shall pay my price.
Abdal. Why would you be so great?
Lyndar. Because I 've seen,
This day, what 'tis to hope to be a queen.—
Heaven, how you all watched each motion of her eye!
None could be seen while Almahide was by,
Because she is to be—her majesty!—
Why would I be a queen? Because my face
Would wear the title with a better grace.
If I became it not, yet it would be
Part of your duty, then, to flatter me.
These are but half the charms of being great;
I would be somewhat, that I know not yet:—
Yes! I avow the ambition of my soul,
To be that one to live without control!
And that 's another happiness to me,
To be so happy as but one can be.
Abdal. Madam,—because I would all doubts remove,—
Would you, were I a king, accept my love?
Lyndar. I would accept it; and, to show 'tis true,
From any other man as soon as you.

Abdal. Your sharp replies make me not love you less;
But make me seek new paths to happiness.—
What I design, by time will best be seen;
You may be mine, and yet may be a queen.
When you are so, your word your love assures.
Lyndar. Perhaps not love you,—but I will be yours.—
[*He offers to take her hand, and kiss it.*
Stay, sir, that grace I cannot yet allow:
Before you set the crown upon my brow.—
That favour which you seek,
Or Abdelmelech, or a king, must have;
When you are so, then you may be my slave.
[*Exit; but looks smiling back on him.*
Abdal. Howe'er imperious in her words she were,
Her parting looks had nothing of severe;
A glancing smile allured me to command,
And her soft fingers gently pressed my hand:
I felt the pleasure glide through every part;
Her hand went through me to my very heart.
For such another pleasure, did he live,
I could my father of a crown deprive.—
What did I say?—
Father!—That impious thought has shocked my mind:
How bold our passions are, and yet how blind!—
She's gone; and now,
Methinks, there is less glory in a crown:
My boiling passions settle, and go down.
Like amber chafed, when she is near, she acts;
When further off, inclines, but not attracts.

Enter ZULEMA.

Assist me, Zulema, if thou wouldst be
That friend thou seem'st, assist me against me.

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Betwixt my love and virtue I am tossed;
This must be forfeited, or that be lost.
I could do much to merit thy applause,—
Help me to fortify the better cause;
My honour is not wholly put to flight,
But would, if seconded, renew the fight.
Zul. I met my sister, but I do not see
What difficulty in your choice can be:
She told me all; and 'tis so plain a case,
You need not ask what counsel to embrace.
Abdal. I stand reproved, that I did doubt at all;
My waiting virtue stayed but for thy call:
'Tis plain that she, who, for a kingdom, now
Would sacrifice her love, and break her vow,
Not out of love, but interest, acts alone,
And would, even in my ~~arms, lie thinking of a~~ throne.
Zul. Add to the rest, this one reflection more:
When she is married, and you still adore,
Think then,—and think what comfort it will bring,—
She had been mine,
Had ~~I but only dared to be a king!~~
Abdal. I hope you only would my honour try;
I 'm loath to think you virtue's enemy.
Zul. If, when a crown and mistress are in place,
Virtue intrudes, with her lean holy face,
Virtue 's then mine, and not I virtue's foe.
Why does she come where she has nought to do?
Let her with anchorites, not with lovers, lie;
Statesmen and they keep better company.
Abdal. Reason was given to curb our head-strong will.
Zul. Reason but shows a weak physician's skill;
Gives nothing, while the raging fit does last,
But stays to cure it, when the worst is past.

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Reason 's a staff for age, when nature 's gone;
But youth is strong enough to walk alone.
Abdal. In cursed ambition I no rest should find,
But must for ever lose my peace of mind.
Zul. Methinks that peace of mind were bravely lost;
A crown whate'er we give, is worth the cost.
Abdal. Justice distributes to each man his right;
But what she gives not, should I take by might?
Zul. If justice will take all, and nothing give,
Justice, methinks, is not distributive.
Abdal. Had fate so pleased, I had been eldest born,
And then, without a crime, the crown had worn!—
Zul. Would you so please, fate yet a way would find;
Man makes his fate according to his mind.
The weak low spirit fortune makes her slave;
But she 's a drudge when hectored by the brave:
If fate weaves common thread, he 'll change the doom,
And with new purple spread a nobler loom.
Abdal. No more!—I will usurp the royal seat;
Thou, who hast made me wicked, make me great.
Zul. Your way is plain: the death of Tarifa
Does on the king our Zegrys' hatred draw:
Though with our enemies in show we close,
'Tis but while we to purpose can be foes.
Selin, who heads us, would revenge his son;
But favour hinders justice to be done.
Proud Ozmyn with the king his power maintains,
And, in him, each Abencerrago, reigns.
Abdal. What face of any title can I bring?
Zul. The right an eldest son has to be a king.

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Your father was at first a private man,
And got your brother ere his reign began:
When, by his valour, he the crown had won,
Then you were born a monarch's eldest son.
Abdal. To sharp-eyed reason this would seem untrue;
But reason I through love's false optics view.
Zul. Love's mighty power has led me captive too;
I am in it unfortunate as you.
Abdal. Our loves and fortunes shall together go;
Thou shalt be happy, when I first am so.
Zul. The Zegrys at old Selin's house are met,
Where, in close council, for revenge they sit:
There we our common interest will unite;
You their revenge shall own, and they your right.
One thing I had forgot which may import:
I met Almanzor coming back from court,
But with a discomposed and speedy pace,
A fiery colour kindling all his face:
The king his prisoner's freedom has denied,
And that refusal has provoked his pride.
Abdal. Would he were ours!—
I'll try to gild the injustice of his cause,
And court his valour with a vast applause.
Zul. The bold are but the instruments o' the wise;
They undertake the dangers we advise:
And, while our fabric with their pains we raise,
We take the profit, and pay them with praise.
[*Exeunt.*

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ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter ALMANZOR *and* ABDALLA.

Almanz. That he should dare to do me this disgrace!—
Is fool, or coward, writ upon my face?
Refuse my prisoner!—I such means will use,
He shall not have a prisoner to refuse.

Abdal. He said, you were not by your promise tied;
That he absolved your word, when he denied.

Almanz. He break my promise and absolve my vow!
'Tis more than Mahomet himself can do!—
The word, which I have given, shall stand like fate;
Not like the king's, that weathercock of state.
He stands so high, with so unfixed a mind,
Two factions turn him with each blast of wind:
But now, he shall not veer! my word is past;
I 'll take his heart by the roots, and hold it fast.

Abdal. You have your vengeance in your hand this hour;
Make me the humble creature of your power:
The Granadines will gladly me obey;
(Tired with so base and impotent a sway)
And, when I show my title, you shall see,
I have a better right to reign than he.

Almanz. It is sufficient that you make the claim;
You wrong our friendship when your right you name.
When for myself I fight, I weigh the cause,
But friendship will admit of no such laws:
That weighs by the lump; and, when the cause is light,
Puts kindness in to set the balance right.

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True, I would wish my friend the juster side;
But, in the unjust, my kindness more is tried:
And all the opposition I can bring,
Is, that I fear to make you such a king.
Abdal. The majesty of kings we should not blame,
When royal minds adorn the royal name;
The vulgar, greatness too much idolise,
But haughty subjects it too much despise.
Almanz. I only speak of him,
Whom pomp and greatness sit so loose about,
That he wants majesty to fill them out.
Abdal. Haste, then, and lose no time!—
The business must be enterprised this night:
We must surprise the court in its delight.
Almanz. For you to will, for me 'tis to obey:
But I would give a crown in open day;
And, when the Spaniards their assault begin,
At once beat those without, and these within.
[*Exit* ALMANZ.

Enter ABDELMELECH.

Abdelm. Abdalla, hold!—There's somewhat I intend
To speak, not as your rival, but your friend.
Abdal. If as a friend, I am obliged to hear;
And what a rival says I cannot fear.
Abdelm. Think, brave Abdalla, what it is you do:
Your quiet, honour, and our friendship too,
All for a fickle beauty you forego.
Think, and turn back, before it be too late.
Behold in me the example of your fate:
I am your sea-mark; and, though wrecked and lost,
My ruins stand to warn you from the coast.

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Abdal. Your counsels, noble Abdelmelech, move
My reason to accept them, not my love.
Ah, why did heaven leave man so weak defence,
To trust frail reason with the rule of sense!
'Tis overpoised and kicked up in the air,
While sense weighs down the scale, and keeps it there;
Or, like a captive king, 'tis borne away,
And forced to count'nance its own rebels' sway.
Abdelm. No, no; our reason was not vainly lent;
Nor is a slave, but by its own consent:
If reason on his subject's triumph wait,
An easy king deserves no better fate.
Abdal. You speak too late; my empire 's lost too far:
I cannot fight.
Abdelm. Then make a flying war;
Dislodge betimes before you are beset.
Abdal. Her tears, her smiles, her every look 's a net.
Her voice is like a Syren's of the land;
And bloody hearts lie panting in her hand.
Abdelm. This do you know, and tempt the danger still?
Abdal. Love, like a lethargy, has seized my will.
I 'm not myself, since from her sight I went;
I lean my trunk that way, and there stand bent.
As one, who, in some frightful dream, would shun
His pressing foe, labours in vain to run;
And his own slowness, in his sleep, bemoans,
With thick short sighs, weak cries, and tender groans,
So I——

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Abdelm. Some friend, in charity, should shake,
And rouse, and call you loudly till you wake.
Too well I know her blandishments to gain,
Usurper-like, till settled in her reign;
Then proudly she insults, and gives you cares,
And jealousies, short hopes, and long despairs.
To this hard yoke you must hereafter bow,
Howe'er she shines all golden to you now.

Abdal. Like him, who on the ice
Slides swiftly on, and sees the water near,
Yet cannot stop himself in his career,
So am I carried. This enchanted place,
Like Circe's isle, is peopled with a race
Of dogs and swine; yet, though their fate I know,
I look with pleasure, and am turning too.

[LYNDARAXA *passes over the Stage.*

Abdelm. Fly, fly, before the allurements of her face,
Ere she return with some resistless grace,
And with new magic cover all the place.

Abdal. I cannot, will not,—nay, I would not fly:
I 'll love, be blind, be cozened till I die;
And you, who bid me wiser counsel take,
I 'll hate, and, if I can, I 'll kill you for her sake.

Abdelm. Even I, that counselled you, that choice approve:
I 'll hate you blindly, and her blindly love.
Prudence, that stemmed the stream, is out of breath;
And to go down it is the easier death.

LYNDARAXA *re-enters, and smiles on* ABDALLA.

[*Exit* ABDALLA.

Abdelm. That smile on Prince Abdalla seems to say,
You are not in your killing mood to-day:

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Men brand, indeed, your sex with cruelty,
But you 're too good to see poor lovers die.
This godlike pity in you I extol;
And more, because, like heaven's, 'tis general.
Lyndar. My smile implies not that I grant his suit:
'Twas but a bare return of his salute.
Abdelm. It said, you were engaged, and I in place;
But, to please both, you would divide the grace.
Lyndar. You 've cause to be contented with your part,
When he has but the look, and you the heart.
Abdelm. In giving but that look, you give what 's mine:
I 'll not one corner of a glance resign.
All 's mine; and I am covetous of my store:
I have not love enough, I 'll tax you more.
Lyndar. I gave not love; 'twas but civility:
He is a prince; that 's due to his degree.
Abdelm. That prince you smiled on is my rival still,
And should, if me you loved, be treated ill.
Lyndar. I know not how to show so rude a spite.
Abdelm. That is, you know not how to love aright;
Or, if you did, you would more difference see
Betwixt our souls, than 'twixt our quality.
Mark, if his birth makes any difference,
If to his words it adds one grain of sense.
That duty, which his birth can make his due,
I 'll pay, but it shall not be paid by you:
For, if a prince courts her whom I adore,
He is my rival, and a prince no more.
Lyndar. And when did I my power so far resign,
That you should regulate each look of mine?

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Abdelm. Then, when you gave your love, you gave that power.

Lyndar. 'Twas during pleasure, 'tis revoked this hour.

Now, call me false, and rail on womankind,—
'Tis all the remedy you 're like to find.

Abdelm. Yes, there 's one more;
I 'll hate you, and this visit is my last.

Lyndar. Do 't, if you can; you know I hold you fast:
Yet, for your quiet, would you could resign
Your love, as easily as I do mine.

Abdelm. Furies and hell, how unconcerned she speaks!
With what indifference all her vows she breaks!
Curse on me, but she smiles!

Lyndar. That smile 's a part of love, and all 's your due:
I take it from the prince, and give it you.

Abdelm. Just heaven, must my poor heart your May-game prove,
To bandy, and make children's play in love?
[*Half crying.*
Ah! how have I this cruelty deserved?
I, who so truly and so long have served!
And left so easily! oh cruel maid!
So easily! it was too unkindly said.
That heart, which could so easily remove,
Was never fixed, nor rooted deep in love.

Lyndar. You lodged it so uneasy in your breast,
I thought you had been weary of the guest.
First, I was treated like a stranger there;
But, when a household friend I did appear,
You thought, it seems, I could not live elsewhere.
Then, by degrees your feigned respect withdrew;
You marked my actions, and my guardian grew.

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But I am not concerned your acts to blame:
My heart to yours but upon liking came;
And, like a bird, whom prying boys molest,
Stays not to breed, where she had built her nest.
Abdelm. I have done ill,
And dare not ask you to be less displeased;
Be but more angry, and my pain is eased.
Lyndar. If I should be so kind a fool, to take
This little satisfaction which you make,
I know you would presume some other time
Upon my goodness, and repeat your crime.
Abdelm. Oh never, never, upon no pretence;
My life 's too short to expiate this offence.
Lyndar. No, now I think on 't, 'tis in vain to try;
'Tis in your nature, and past remedy.
You 'll still disquiet my too loving heart:
Now we are friends 'tis best for both to part.
[*He takes her hand.*
Abdelm. By this—Will you not give me leave to swear?
Lyndar. You would be perjured if you should, I fear:
And, when I talk with Prince Abdalla next,
I with your fond suspicions shall be vext.
Abdelm. I cannot say I 'll conquer jealousy,
But, if you 'll freely pardon me, I 'll try.
Lyndar. And, till you that submissive servant prove,
I never can conclude you truly love.

To them, the King, ALMAHIDE, ABENAMAR, ESPERANZA, *Guards, Attendants.*

Boab. Approach, my Almahide, my charming fair,
Blessing of peace, and recompence of war.
This night is yours; and may your life still be
The same in joy, though not solemnity.

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THE ZAMBRA DANCE.

SONG.*

I.

Beneath a myrtle shade,
Which love for none but happy lovers made,
I slept; and straight my love before me brought
Phyllis, the object of my waking thought.
Undressed she came my flames to meet,
While love strewed flowers beneath her feet;
Flowers which, so pressed by her, became more sweet.

II.

From the bright vision's head
A careless veil of lawn was loosely spread:
From her white temples fell her shaded hair,
Like cloudy sunshine, not too brown nor fair;
Her hands, her lips, did love inspire;
Her every grace my heart did fire:
But most her eyes, which languished with desire.

III.

Ah, charming fair, said I,
How long can you my bliss and yours deny?
By nature and by love, this lonely shade
Was for revenge of suffering lovers made.
Silence and shades with love agree;
Both shelter you and favour me:
You cannot blush, because I cannot see.

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* [This exquisite song, which, but for certain blemishes (regarded as such even by contemporaries), would deserve a place in every English anthology, was inserted here after the first edition. It there appears next to the epilogue, with the warning, "misplaced, sung at the dance or Zambra in the third Act."]

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IV.

No, let me die, she said,
Rather than lose the spotless name of maid!—
Faintly, methought, she spoke; for all the while
She bid me not believe her, with a smile.
Then die, said I: She still denied;
And is it thus, thus, thus, she cried,
You use a harmless maid?—and so she died!

V.

I waked, and straight I knew,
I loved so well, it made my dream prove true:
Fancy, the kinder mistress of the two,
Fancy had done what Phyllis would not do!
Ah, cruel nymph, cease your disdain,
While I can dream you scorn in vain,—
Asleep or waking you must ease my pain.

[After the dance, a tumultuous noise of drums and trumpets.

To them OZMYN; *his sword drawn.*

Ozm. Arm, quickly arm; yet all, I fear, too late;
The enemy 's already at the gate.
Boab. The Christians are dislodged; what foe is near?
Ozm. The Zegrys are in arms, and almost here:
The streets with torches shine, with shoutings ring,
And Prince Abdalla is proclaimed the king.
What man could do, I have already done,
But bold Almanzor fiercely leads them on.
Aben. The Alhambra yet is safe in my command; [*To the King.*
Retreat you thither, while their shock we stand.
Boab. I cannot meanly for my life provide;
I 'll either perish in 't, or stem this tide.

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To guard the palace, Ozmyn, be your care:
If they o'ercome, no sword will hurt the fair.
Ozm. I 'll either die, or I 'll make good the place.
Abdelm. And I with these will bold Almanzor face.
[*Exeunt all but the Ladies. An alarum within.*
Almah. What dismal planet did my triumphs light!
Discord the day, and death does rule the night:
The noise my soul does through my senses wound.
Lyndar. Methinks it is a noble, sprightly sound,
The trumpet's clangour, and the clash of arms!
This noise may chill your blood, but mine it warms.
[*Shouting and clashing of swords within.*
We have already passed the Rubicon;
The dice are mine; now, fortune, for a throne!
[*A shout within, and clashing of swords afar off.*
The sound goes farther off, and faintly dies;
Curse of this going back, these ebbing cries!
Ye winds, waft hither sounds more strong and quick;
Beat faster, drums, and mingle deaths more thick.
I 'll to the turrets of the palace go,
And add new fire to those that fight below:
Thence, Hero-like, with torches by my side,
(Far be the omen, though) my love will guide.
No; like his better fortune I 'll appear,
With open arms, loose veil, and flowing hair,
Just flying forward from my rolling sphere;
My smiles shall make Abdalla more than man;
Let him look up, and perish if he can. [*Exit.*

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An alarum nearer: Then enter ALMANZOR *and* SELIN, *at the head of the Zegrys;* OZMYN *Prisoner.*

Almanz. We have not fought enough; they fly too soon;
And I am grieved the noble sport is done.
This only man, of all whom chance did bring
[*Pointing to* OZMYN.
To meet my arms, was worth the conquering.
His brave resistance did my fortune grace;
So slow, so threat'ning forward, he gave place.
His chains be easy, and his usage fair.
Selin. I beg you would commit him to my care.
Almanz. Next, the brave Spaniard free without delay;
And with a convoy send him safe away.
[*Exit a Guard.*

To them HAMET *and others.*

Hamet. The king by me salutes you; and, to show
That to your valour he his crown does owe,
Would from your mouth I should the word receive,
And that to these you would your orders give.
Almanz. He much o'errates the little I have done.
[ALMANZOR *goes to the door, and there seems to give out orders, by sending people several ways.*
Selin to *Ozmyn.* Now, to revenge the murder of my son,
To-morrow for thy certain death prepare;
This night I only leave thee to despair.
Ozmyn. Thy idle menaces I do not fear:
My business was to die or conquer here.

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Sister, for you I grieve I could no more:
My present state betrays my want of power;
But, when true courage is of force bereft,
Patience, the only fortitude, is left.

[*Exit with* SELIN.

Almah. Ah, Esperanza, what for me remains
But death, or, worse than death, inglorious chains!

Esper. Madam, you must not to despair give place;
Heaven never meant misfortune to that face.
Suppose there were no justice in your cause,
Beauty 's a bribe that gives her judges laws.
That you are brought to this deplored estate,
Is but the ingenious flattery of your fate;
Fate fears her succour, like an alms, to give;
And would you, God-like, from yourself should live.

Almah. Mark but how terribly his eyes appear!
And yet there 's something roughly noble there,
Which, in unfashioned nature, looks divine,
And, like a gem, does in the quarry shine.

[ALMANZOR *returns; she falls at his feet, being veiled.*

Almah. Turn, mighty conqueror, turn your face this way,
Do not refuse to hear the wretched pray!

Almanz. What business can this woman have with me?

Almah. That of the afflicted to the Deity.
So may your arms success in battle find;
So may the mistress of your vows be kind,
If you have any; or, if you have none,
So may your liberty be still your own!

Almanz. Yes, I will turn my face, but not my mind:
You bane and soft destruction of mankind,
What would you have with me?

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Almah. I beg the grace [*Unveiling.*
You would lay by those terrors of your face.
Till calmness to your eyes you first restore,
I am afraid, and I can beg no more.
Almanz. [*Looking fixedly on her.*] Well; my fierce visage shall not murder you.
Speak quickly, woman; I have much to do.
Almah. Where should I find the heart to speak one word?
Your voice, sir, is as killing as your sword.
As you have left the lightning of your eye,
So would you please to lay your thunder by.
Almanz. I 'm pleased and pained, since first her eyes I saw,
As I were stung with some tarantula,
Arms, and the dusty field, I less admire,
And soften strangely in some new desire;
Honour burns in me not so fiercely bright,
But pale as fires when mastered by the light:
Even while I speak and look, I change yet more,
And now am nothing that I was before.
I 'm numbed, and fixed, and scarce my eyeballs move:
I fear it is the lethargy of love!
'Tis he; I feel him now in every part:
Like a new lord he vaunts about my heart;
Surveys, in state, each corner of my breast,
While poor fierce I, that was, am dispossessed.
I 'm bound; but I will rouse my rage again;
And, though no hope of liberty remain,
I 'll fright my keeper when I shake my chain.
You are—— [*Angrily.*
Almah. I know I am your captive, sir.
Almanz. You are—You shall—And I can scarce forbear——
Almah. Alas!

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Almanz. 'Tis all in vain; it will not do:
[*Aside.*
I cannot now a seeming anger show:
My tongue against my heart no aid affords;
For love still rises up, and chokes my words.

Almah. In half this time a tempest would be still.

Almanz. 'Tis you have raised that tempest in my will.
I wonnot love you; give me back my heart;
But give it, as you had it, fierce and brave.
It was not made to be a woman's slave.
But, lion-like, has been in deserts bred,
And, used to range, will ne'er be tamely led.
Restore its freedom to my fettered will,
And then I shall have power to use you ill.

Almah. My sad condition may your pity move;
But look not on me with the eyes of love:——
I must be brief, though I have much to say.

Almanz. No, speak; for I can hear you now all day.
Her sueing soothes me with a secret pride:
[*Softly.*
A suppliant beauty cannot be denied: [*Aside.*
Even while I frown, her charms the furrows seize;
And I 'm corrupted with the power to please.

Almah. Though in your worth no cause of fear I see,
I fear the insolence of victory;
As you are noble, sir, protect me then
From the rude outrage of insulting men.

Almanz. Who dares touch her I love? I 'm all o'er love:
Nay, I am love; love shot, and shot so fast,
He shot himself into my breast at last.

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Almah. You see before you her, who should be queen,
Since she is promised to Boabdelin.
Almanz. Are you beloved by him? O wretched fate,
First that I love at all; then, loved too late!
Yet, I must love!
Almah. Alas, it is in vain;
Fate for each other did not us ordain.
The chances of this day too clearly show
That heaven took care that it should not be so.
Almanz. Would heaven had quite forgot me this one day!
But fate 's yet hot——
I 'll make it take a bent another way.
[*He walks swiftly and discomposedly, studying.*
I bring a claim which does his ~~right remove;~~
You 're his by promise, but you 're mine by love.
'Tis all but ceremony which is past;
The knot 's to tie which is to make you fast.
Fate gave not to Boabdelin that power;
He wooed you but ~~as my ambassador.~~
Almah. Our souls are tied by holy vows above.
Almanz. He signed but his; but I will seal my love.
I love you better, with more zeal than he.
Almah. This day
I gave my faith to him, he his to me.
Almanz. Good heaven, thy book of fate before me lay,
But to tear out the journal of this day:
Or, if the order of the world below
Will not the gap of one whole day allow,
Give me that minute when she made her vow!

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That minute, ev'n the happy from their bliss might give;
And those, who live in grief, a shorter time would live.
So small a link, if broke, the eternal chain
Would, like divided waters, join again.—
It wonnot be; the fugitive is gone,
Pressed by the crowd of following minutes on:
That precious moment 's out of nature fled,
And in the heap of common rubbish laid,
Of things that once have been, and are decayed.
Almah. Your passion, like a fright, suspends my pain;
It meets, o'erpowers, and beats mine back again:
But as, when tides against the current flow,
The native stream runs its own course below,
So, though your griefs possess the upper part,
My own have deeper channels in my heart.
Almanz. Forgive that fury which my soul does move;
'Tis the essay of an untaught first love:
Yet rude, unfashioned truth it does express;
'Tis love just peeping in a hasty dress.
Retire, fair creature, to your needful rest;
There 's something noble labouring in my breast:
This raging fire, which through the mass does move,
Shall purge my dross, and shall refine my love.
[*Exeunt* ALMAHIDE *and* ESPERANZA.
She goes, and I like my own ghost appear;
It is not living when she is not here.

To him ABDALLA *as King, attended.*

Abdal. My first acknowledgments to heaven are due;
My next, Almanzor, let me pay to you.
Almanz. A poor surprise, and on a naked foe,
Whatever you confess, is all you owe;

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And I no merit own, or understand
That fortune did you justice by my hand:
Yet, if you will that little service pay
With a great favour, I can show the way.

Abdal. I have a favour to demand of you;
That is, to take the thing for which you sue.

Almanz. Then, briefly, thus: when I the Albayzyn won,
I found the beauteous Almahide alone,
Whose sad condition did my pity move;
And that compassion did produce my love.

Abdal. This needs no suit; in justice, I declare,
She is your captive by the right of war.

Almanz. She is no captive then; I set her free;
And, rather than I will her jailer be,
I'll nobly lose her in her liberty.

Abdal. Your generosity I much approve;
But your excess of that shows want of love.

Almanz. No, 'tis the excess of love which mounts so high,
That seen far off, it lessens to the eye.
Had I not loved her, and had set her free,
That, sir, had been my generosity;
But 'tis exalted passion, when I show
I dare be wretched, not to make her so:
And, while another passion fills her breast,
I'll be all wretched rather than half blest.

Abdal. May your heroic act so prosperous be,
That Almahide may sigh you set her free.

Enter ZULEMA.

Zul. Of five tall towers which fortify this town,
All but the Alhambra your dominion own:
Now, therefore, boldly I confess a flame,
Which is excused in Almahide's name.
If you the merit of this night regard,
In her possession I have my reward.

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Almanz. She your reward! why, she's a gift so great,
That I myself have not deserved her yet;
And therefore, though I won her with my sword,
I have, with awe, my sacrilege restored.
Zul. What you deserve
I 'll not dispute because I do not know;
This only I will say, she shall not go.
Almanz. Thou, single, art not worth my answering:
But take what friends, what armies thou canst bring;
What worlds; and, when you are united all,
Then will I thunder in your ears,—She shall.
Zul. I 'll not one tittle of my right resign.—
Sir, your implicit promise made her mine;
When I, in general terms, my love did show,
You swore our fortunes should together go.
Abdal. The merits of the cause I 'll not decide,
But, like my love, I would my gift divide.
Your equal titles then no longer plead;
But one of you, for love of me, recede.
Almanz. I have receded to the utmost line,
When, by my free consent, she is not mine:
Then let him equally recede with me,
And both of us will join to set her free.
Zul. If you will free your part of her, you may;
But, sir, I love not your romantic way.
Dream on, enjoy her soul, and set that free;
I 'm pleased her person should be left for me.
Almanz. Thou shalt not wish her thine; thou shalt not dare
To be so impudent as to despair.
Zul. The Zegrys, sir, are all concerned to see
How much their merit you neglect in me.
Hamet. Your slighting Zulema, this very hour
Will take ten thousand subjects from your power.

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Almanz. What are ten thousand subjects such as they?
If I am scorned——I 'll take myself away.
Abdal. Since both can not possess what both pursue,
I grieve, my friend, the chance should fall on you;
But when you hear what reasons I can urge——
Almanz. None, none that your ingratitude can purge.
Reason 's a trick, when it no grant affords;
It stamps the face of majesty on words.
Abdal. Your boldness to your services I give:
Now take it, as your full reward,—to live.
Almanz. To live!
If from thy hands alone my death can be,
I am immortal, and a god to thee.
If I would kill thee now, thy fate 's so low,
That I must stoop ere I can give the blow:
But mine is fixed so far above thy crown,
That all thy men,
Piled on thy back, can never pull it down:
But at my ease thy destiny I send,
By ceasing from this hour to be thy friend.
Like heaven, I need but only to stand still,
And, not concurring in thy life, I kill.
Thou canst no title to my duty bring;
I 'm not thy subject, and my soul 's thy king.
Farewell. When I am gone,
There 's not a star of thine dare stay with thee:
I 'll whistle thy tame fortune after me;
And whirl fate with me wheresoe'er I fly,
As winds drive storms before them in the sky.
[*Exit.*

Zul. Let not this insolent unpunished go;
Give your commands; your justice is too slow.
[ZULEMA, HAMET, *and others are going after him.*

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Abd. Stay, and what part he pleases let him take:
I know my throne 's too strong for him to shake.
But my fair mistress I too long forget;
The crown I promised is not offered yet.
Without her presence all my joys are vain,
Empire a curse, and life itself a pain. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter BOABDELIN, ABENAMAR, *and Guards.*

Boab. Advise, or aid, but do not pity me:
No monarch born can fall to that degree.
Pity descends from kings to all below;
But can, no more than fountains, upward flow.
Witness, just heaven, my greatest grief has been,
I could not make your Almahide a queen.
Aben. I have too long the effects of fortune known,
Either to trust her smiles, or fear her frown.
Since in their first attempt you were not slain,
Your safety bodes you yet a second reign.
The people like a headlong torrent go,
And ev'ry dam they break, or overflow;
But, unopposed, they either lose their force,
Or wind, in volumes, to their former course.
Boab. In walls we meanly must our hopes enclose,
To wait our friends, and weary out our foes:
While Almahide
To lawless rebels is exposed a prey,
And forced the lustful victor to obey.
Aben. One of my blood, in rules of virtue bred!
Think better of her, and believe she 's dead.

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Enter ALMANZOR.

Boab. We are betrayed, the enemy is here;
We have no farther room to hope or fear.
Almanz. It is indeed Almanzor whom you see,
But he no longer is your enemy.
You were ungrateful, but your foes were more;
What your injustice lost you, theirs restore.
Make profit of my vengeance while you may,
My two-edged sword can cut the other way.—
I am your fortune, but am swift like her,
And turn my hairy front if you defer:
That hour, when you deliberate, is too late;
I point you the white moment of your fate.
Aben. Believe him sent as prince Abdalla's spy;
He would betray us to the enemy.
Almanz. Were I, like thee, in cheats of state grown old
(Those public markets, where for foreign gold,
The poorer prince is to the richer sold),
Then thou mightst think me fit for that low part;
But I am yet to learn the statesman's art.
My kindness and my hate unmasked I wear;
For friends to trust, and enemies to fear.
My heart 's so plain,
That men on every passing thought * may look,
Like fishes gliding in a crystal brook;
When troubled most, it does the bottom show,
'Tis weedless all above, and rockless all below.
Aben. Ere he be trusted, let him then be tried;
He may be false, who once has changed his side.
Almanz. In that you more accuse yourselves than me;
None who are injured can inconstant be.

* [This in the folio (reproduced in Scott) becomes "through," with the result of utter nonsense.—ED.]

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You were inconstant, you, who did the wrong;
To do me justice does to me belong.
Great souls by kindness only can be tied;
Injured again, again I 'll leave your side.
Honour is what myself, and friends, I owe;
And none can lose it who forsake a foe.
Since, then, your foes now happen to be mine,
Though not in friendship, we 'll in interest join:
So while my loved revenge is full and high,
I 'll give you back your kingdom by the by.

Boab. That I so long delayed what you desire,
[*Embracing him.*
Was, not to doubt your worth, but to admire.

Almanz. This counsellor an old man's caution shows,
Who fears that little, he has left, to lose:
Age sets a fortune; while youth boldly throws.
But let us first your drooping soldiers cheer;
Then seek out danger, ere it dare appear:
This hour I fix your crown upon your brow;
Next hour fate gives it, but I give it now.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter LYNDARAXA.

Lyndar. O, could I read the dark decrees of fate,
That I might once know whom to love, or hate!
For I myself scarce my own thoughts can guess,
So much I find them varied by success.
As in some weather-glass, my love I hold;
Which falls or rises with the heat or cold.—
I will be constant yet, if fortune can;
I love the king,—let her but name the man.

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Enter HALYMA.

Hal. Madam, a gentleman, to me unknown,
Desires that he may speak with you alone.
Lyndar. Some message from the king.—Let him appear.

Enter ABDELMELECH; *who throws off his disguise.—She starts.*

Abdelm. I see you are amazed that I am here:
But let at once your fear and wonder end.
In the usurper's guards I found a friend,
Who led me to you safe in this disguise.
Lyndar. Your danger brings this trouble in my eyes.—
But what affair this 'venturous visit drew?
Abdelm. The greatest in the world,—the seeing you.
Lyndar. The courage of your love I so admire,
That, to preserve you, you shall straight retire.
[*She leads him to the door.*
Go, dear! each minute does new dangers bring;
You will be taken; I expect the king.
Abdelm. The king!—the poor usurper of an hour:
His empire 's but a dream of kingly power.—
I warn you, as a lover and a friend,
To leave him, ere his short dominion end:
The soldier I suborned will wait at night,
And shall alone be conscious of your flight.
Lyndar. I thank you, that you so much care bestow;
But, if his reign be short, I need not go.
For why should I expose my life, and yours,
For what, you say, a little time assures?

Abdelm. My danger in the attempt is very small;
And, if he loves you, yours is none at all.
But, though his ruin be as sure as fate,
Your proof of love to me would come too late.
This trial I in kindness would allow;
'Tis easy; if you love me, show it now.
Lyndar. It is because I love you, I refuse;
For all the world my conduct would accuse,
If I should go with him I love away:
And, therefore, in strict virtue I will stay.
Abdelm. You would in vain dissemble love to me;
Through that thin veil your artifice I see.
You would expect the event, and then declare;
But do not, do not drive me to despair:
For, if you now refuse with me to fly,
Rather than love you after this, I 'll die;
And, therefore, weigh it well before you speak;
My king is safe, his force within not weak.
Lyndar. The counsel, you have given me, may be wise;
But, since the affair is great, I will advise.
Abdelm. Then that delay I for denial take.
[*Is going.*
Lyndar. Stay; you too swift an exposition make.
If I should go, since Zulema will stay,
I should my brother to the king betray.
Abdelm. There is no fear; but, if there were, I see
You value still your brother more than me.—
Farewell! some ease I in your falsehood find;
It lets a beam in, that will clear my mind:
My former weakness I with shame confess,
And, when I see you next, shall love you less.
[*Is going again.*

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Lyndar. Your faithless dealings you may blush to tell; [*Weeping.*
This is a maid's reward, who loves too well.—
[*He looks back.*
Remember that I drew my latest breath,
In charging your unkindness with my death.
Abdelm. [*coming back.*] Have I not answered all you can invent,
Even the least shadow of an argument?
Lyndar. You want not cunning what you please to prove,
But my poor heart knows only how to love;
And, finding this, you tyrannise the more:
'Tis plain, some other mistress you adore;
And now, with studied tricks of subtlety,
You come prepared to lay the fault on me.
[*Wringing her hands.*
But, oh, that I should love so false a man!
Abdelm. Hear me, and then disprove it, if you can.
Lyndar. I 'll hear no more; your breach of faith is plain:
You would with wit your want of love maintain.
But, by my own experience, I can tell,
They, who love truly, cannot argue well.—
Go, faithless man!
Leave me alone to mourn my misery;
I cannot cease to love you, but I 'll die.
[*Leans her head on his arm.*
Abdelm. What man but I so long unmoved could hear [*Weeping.*
Such tender passion, and refuse a tear!—
But do not talk of dying any more,
Unless you mean that I should die before.
Lyndar. I fear your feigned repentance comes too late;
I die, to see you still thus obstinate:

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But yet, in death my truth of love to show,
Lead me; if I have strength enough, I 'll go.
Abdelm. By heaven, you shall not go! I will not be
O'ercome in love or generosity.
All I desire, to end the unlucky strife,
Is but a vow, that you will be my wife.
Lyndar. To tie me to you by a vow is hard;
It shows, my love you as no tie regard.—
Name anything but that, and I 'll agree.
Abdelm. Swear, then, you never will my rival's be.
Lyndar. Nay, pr'ythee, this is harder than before.—
Name anything, good dear, but that thing more.
Abdelm. Now I too late perceive I am undone;
Living and seeing, to my death I run.
I know you false, yet in your snares I fall;
You grant me nothing, and I grant you all.
Lyndar. I would grant all; but I must curb my will,
Because I love to keep you jealous still.
In your suspicion I your passion find;
But I will take a time to cure your mind.
Halyma. O, madam, the new king is drawing near!
Lyndar. Haste quickly hence, lest he should find you here!
Abdelm. How much more wretched than I came, I go!
I more my weakness and your falsehood know;
And now must leave you with my greatest foe!
[*Exit* ABDELM.
Lyndar. Go!—How I love thee heaven can only tell:
And yet I love thee, for a subject, well.—

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Yet, whatsoever charms a crown can bring,
A subject's greater than a little king.
I will attend till time this throne secure;
And, when I climb, my footing shall be sure.—
[*Music without.*
Music! and, I believe, addressed to me.

SONG.

I.

Wherever I am, and whatever I do,
My Phyllis is still in my mind;
When angry, I mean not to Phyllis to go,
My feet, of themselves, the way find:
Unknown to myself I am just at her door,
And, when I would rail, I can bring out no more,
Than, Phyllis too fair and unkind!

II.

When Phyllis I see, my heart bounds in my breast,
And the love I would stifle is shown;
But asleep, or awake, I am never at rest,
When from my eyes Phyllis is gone.
Sometimes a sad dream does delude my sad mind;
But, alas! when I wake, and no Phyllis I find,
How I sigh to myself all alone!

III.

Should a king be my rival in her I adore,
He should offer his treasure in vain:
O, let me alone to be happy and poor,
And give me my Phyllis again!
Let Phyllis be mine, and but ever be kind,
I could to a desert with her be confined,
And envy no monarch his reign.

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IV.

Alas! I discover too much of my love,
And she too well knows her own power!
She makes me each day a new martyrdom prove,
And makes me grow jealous each hour:
But let her each minute torment my poor mind,
I had rather love Phyllis, both false and unkind,
Than ever be freed from her power.

Enter ABDALLA, *with guards.*

Abdal. Now, madam, at your feet a king you see;
Or, rather, if you please, a sceptred slave:
'Tis just you should possess the power you gave.
Had love not made me yours, I yet had been
But the first subject to Boabdelin.
Thus Heaven declares the crown I bring your due;
And had forgot my title, but for you.
Lyndar. Heaven to your merits will, I hope, be kind;
But, sir, it has not yet declared its mind.
'Tis true, it holds the crown above your head;
But does not fix it 'till your brother's dead.
Abdal. All, but the Alhambra, is within my power;
And that my forces go to take this hour.
Lyndar. When, with its keys your brother's head you bring,
I shall believe you are indeed a king.
Abdal. But since the events of all things doubtful are,
And, of events, most doubtful those of war;
I beg to know before, if fortune frown,
Must I then lose your favour with my crown?
Lyndar. You 'll soon return a conqueror again;
And, therefore, sir, your question is in vain.

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Abdal. I think to certain victory I move;
But you may more assure it, by your love.
That grant will make my arms invincible.
Lyndar. My prayers and wishes your success foretell.—
Go then, and fight, and think you fight for me;
I wait but to reward your victory.
Abdal. But if I lose it, must I lose you too?
Lyndar. You are too curious, if you more would know.
I know not what my future thoughts will be:
Poor women's thoughts are all *extempore.*
Wise men, indeed,
Beforehand a long chain of thoughts produce;
But ours are only for our present use.
Abdal. Those thoughts, you will not know, too well declare,
You mean to wait the final doom of war.
Lyndar. I find you come to quarrel with me now;
Would you know more of me than I allow?
Whence are you grown that great divinity,
That with such ease into my thoughts can pry?
Indulgence does not with some tempers suit;
I see I must become more absolute.
Abdal. I must submit,
On what hard terms soe'er my peace be bought.
Lyndar. Submit!—you speak as you were not in fault.—
'Tis evident the injury is mine;
For why should you my secret thoughts divine?
Abdal. Yet if we might be judged by reason's laws——
Lyndar. Then you would have your reason judge my cause!—
Either confess your fault, or hold your tongue;
For I am sure I 'm never in the wrong.

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Abdal. Then I acknowledge it.
Lyndar. Then I forgive.
Abdal. Under how hard a law poor lovers live!
Who, like the vanquished, must their right release,
And with the loss of reason buy their peace.—
[*Aside.*
Madam, to show that you my power command,
I put my life and safety in your hand:—
Dispose of the Albayzyn as you please,
To your fair hands I here resign the keys.
Lyndar. I take your gift, because your love it shows,
And faithful Selin for alcalde choose.
Abdal. Selin, from her alone your orders take.—
This one request, yet, madam, let me make,
That, from those turrets, you the assault will see;
And crown, once more, my arms with victory.
[*Exeunt, leading her out.*
[SELIN *remains with* GAZUL *and* REDUAN, *his servants.*
Selin. Gazul, go tell my daughter that I wait.—
You, Reduan, bring the prisoner to his fate.
[*Exeunt* GAZ. *and* RED.
Ere of my charge I will possession take,
A bloody sacrifice I mean to make:
The manes of my son shall smile this day,
While I, in blood, my vows of vengeance pay.

Enter at one door BENZAYDA, *with* GAZUL; *at the other,* OZMYN *bound, with* REDUAN.

Selin. I sent, Benzayda, to glad your eyes:
These rites we owe your brother's obsequies.—

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You two [*To* GAZ. *and* RED.] the cursed Abencerrago bind:
You need no more to instruct you in my mind.
[*They bind him to one corner of the stage.*
Benz. In what sad object am I called to share?
Tell me, what is it, sir, you here prepare?
Selin. 'Tis what your dying brother did bequeath;
A scene of vengeance, and a pomp of death!
Benz. The horrid spectacle my soul does fright:
I want the heart to see the dismal sight.
Selin. You are my principal invited guest,
Whose eyes I would not only feed, but feast:
You are to smile at his last groaning breath,
And laugh to see his eyeballs roll in death;
To judge the lingering soul's convulsive strife,
When thick short breath catches at parting life.
Benz. And of what marble do you think me made?
Selin. What! can you be of just revenge afraid?
Benz. He killed my brother in his own defence.
Pity his youth, and spare his innocence.
Selin. Art thou so soon to pardon murder won?
Can he be innocent, who killed my son?
Abenamar shall mourn as well as I;
His Ozmyn, for my Tarifa, shall die.
But since thou plead'st so boldly, I will see
That justice, thou wouldst hinder done by thee.
Here, [*Gives her his sword.*] take the sword, and do a sister's part:
Pierce his, fond girl, or I will pierce thy heart.
Ozm. To his commands I join my own request;
All wounds from you are welcome to my breast:
Think only, when your hand this act has done,
It has but finished what your eyes begun.

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I thought, with silence, to have scorned my doom;
But now your noble pity has o'ercome;
Which I acknowledge with my latest breath,—
The first whoe'er began a love in death.

Benz. to *Selin.* Alas, what aid can my weak hand afford?
You see I tremble when I touch a sword:
The brightness dazzles me, and turns my sight;
Or, if I look, 'tis but to aim less right.

Ozm. I 'll guide the hand which must my death convey;
My leaping heart shall meet it half the way.

Selin to *Benz.* Waste not the precious time in idle breath.

Benz. Let me resign this instrument of death.

[*Giving the sword to her father, and then pulling it back.*

Ah, no! I was too hasty to resign:
'Tis in your hand more mortal than in mine.

Enter HAMET.

Hamet. The king is from the Alhambra beaten back,
And now preparing for a new attack;
To favour which, he wills, that instantly
You reinforce him with a new supply.

Selin to *Benz.* Think not, although my duty calls me hence,
That with the breach of yours I will dispense.
Ere my return, see my commands you do:
Let me find Ozmyn dead, and killed by you.—
Gazul and Reduan, attend her still;
And, if she dares to fail, perform my will.

[*Exeunt* SELIN *and* HAMET.

[BENZAYDA *looks languishing on him, with her sword down;* GAZUL *and* REDUAN *standing with drawn swords by her.*

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Ozm. Defer not, fair Benzayda, my death:
Looking on you,
I should but live to sigh away my breath.
My eyes have done the work they had to do:
I take your image with me, which they drew;
And, when they close, I shall die full of you.
Benz. When parents their commands unjustly lay,
Children are privileged to disobey;
Yet from that breach of duty I am clear,
Since I submit the penalty to bear.
To die, or kill you, is the alternative;
Rather than take your life, I will not live.
Ozm. This shows the excess of generosity;
But, madam, you have no pretence to die.
I should defame the Abencerrages' race,
To let a lady suffer in my place.
But neither could that life, you would bestow,
Save mine; nor do you so much pity owe
To me, a stranger, and your house's foe.
Benz. From whencesoe'er their hate our houses drew,
I blush to tell you, I have none for you.
'Tis a confession which I should not make,
Had I more time to give, or you to take:
But, since death 's near, and runs with so much force,
We must meet first, and intercept his course.
Ozm. Oh, how unkind a comfort do you give!
Now I fear death again, and wish to live.
Life were worth taking, could I have it now;
But 'tis more good than Heaven can e'er allow
To one man's portion, to have life and you.
Benz. Sure, at our births,
Death with our meeting planets danced above,
Or we were wounded by a mourning love!—
[*Shouts within.*

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Red. The noise returns, and doubles from behind;
It seems as if two adverse armies joined.—
Time presses us.
Gaz. If longer you delay,
We must, though loth, your father's will obey.
Ozm. Haste, madam, to fulfil his hard commands,
And rescue me from their ignoble hands.
Let me kiss yours, when you my wound begin,
Then easy death will slide with pleasure in.
Benz. Ah, gentle soldiers, some short time allow! [*To* GAZ. *and* RED.
My father has repented him ere now;
Or will repent him, when he finds me dead.
My clue of life is twined with Ozmyn's thread.
Red. 'Tis fatal to refuse her, or obey.—
But where is our excuse? what can we say?
Benz. Say anything.
Say, that to kill the guiltless you were loth;
Or if you did, say, I would kill you both.
Gaz. To disobey our orders is to die.—
I 'll do 't,—who dare oppose it?
Red. That dare I.
[REDUAN *stands before* OZMYN, *and fights with* GAZUL. BENZAYDA *unbinds* OZMYN, *and gives him her sword.*
Benz. Stay not to see the issue of the fight;
[RED. *kills* GAZ.
But haste to save yourself by speedy flight.
[OZMYN *kneels to kiss her hand.*
Ozm. Did all mankind against my life conspire,
Without this blessing I would not retire.—
But, madam, can I go and leave you here?
Your father's anger now for you I fear:
Consider you have done too much to stay.
Benz. Think not of me, but fly yourself away.

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Red. Haste quickly hence; the enemies are nigh!
From every part I see the soldiers fly.
The foes not only our assailants beat,
But fiercely sally out on their retreat,
And, like a sea broke loose, come on amain.

Enter ABENAMAR, *and a party with their swords drawn, driving in some of the enemies.*

Aben. Traitors, you hope to save yourselves in vain!—
Your forfeit lives shall for your treason pay;
And Ozmyn's blood shall be revenged this day.
Ozm. No, sir, your Ozmyn lives; and lives to own [*Kneeling to his father.*
A father's piety to free his son.
Aben. My Ozmyn!—O, thou blessing of my age! [*Embracing him.*
And art thou safe from their deluded rage!—
Whom must I praise for thy deliverance?
Was it thy valour, or the work of chance?
Ozm. Nor chance, nor valour, could deliver me;
But 'twas a noble pity set me free.—
My liberty, and life,
And what your happiness you 're pleased to call,
We to this charming beauty owe it all.
Aben. Instruct me, visible divinity!— [*To her.*
Instruct me by what name to worship thee!
For to thy virtue I would altars raise,
Since thou art much above all human praise.
But see,——

Enter ALMANZOR, *his sword bloody, leading in* ALMAHIDE, *attended by* ESPERANZA.

My other blessing, Almahide, is here!—
I 'll to the king, and tell him she is near:

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You, Ozmyn, on your fair deliverer wait,
And with your private joys the public celebrate.
[*Exeunt* ABEN. OZM. *and* BENZ.
Almanz. The work is done; now, madam, you are free;
At least, if I can give you liberty:
But you have chains which you yourself have chose;
And, O, that I could free you too from those!
But you are free from force, and have full power
To go, and kill my hopes and me, this hour.—
I see, then, you will go; but yet my toil
May be rewarded with a looking-while.
Almah. Almanzor can from every subject raise
New matter for our wonder and his praise.
You bound and freed me; but the difference is,
That showed your valour; but your virtue this.
Almanz. Madam, you praise a funeral victory,
At whose sad pomp the conqueror must die.
Almah. Conquest attends Almanzor everywhere;
I am too small a foe for him to fear:
But heroes still must be opposed by some,
Or they would want occasion to o'ercome.
Almanz. Madam, I cannot on bare praises live;
Those, who abound in praises, seldom give.
Almah. While I to all the world your worth make known,
May Heaven reward the pity you have shown!
Almanz. My love is languishing, and starved to death;
And would you give me charity—in breath?
Prayers are the alms of churchmen to the poor:
They send 's to heaven, but drive us from their door.
Almah. Cease, cease a suit

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So vain to you, and troublesome to me,
If you will have me think that I am free.
If I am yet a slave, my bonds I 'll bear;
But what I cannot grant, I will not hear.
Almanz. You will not hear!—You must both
hear and grant;
For, madam, there 's an impudence in want.
Almah. Your way is somewhat strange to ask
relief;
You ask with threatening, like a begging thief.—
Once more, Almanzor, tell me, am I free?
Almanz. Madam, you are, from all the world,
—but me!—
But as a pirate, when he frees the prize
He took from friends, sees the rich merchandise,
And, after he has freed it, justly buys;
So, when I have restored your liberty—
But then, alas, I am too poor to buy!
Almah. Nay, now you use me just as pirates
do:
You free me; but expect a ransom too.
Almanz. You 've all the freedom that a prince
can have;
But greatness cannot be without a slave.
A monarch never can in private move,
But still is haunted with officious love.
So small an inconvenience you may bear;
'Tis all the fine fate sets upon the fair.
Almah. Yet princes may retire, whene'er they
please,
And breathe free air from out their palaces:
They go sometimes unknown, to shun their state;
And then, 'tis manners not to know or wait.
Almanz. If not a subject then, a ghost I 'll be;
And from a ghost, you know, no place is free.
Asleep, awake, I 'll haunt you everywhere;
From my white shroud groan love into your ear:

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When in your lover's arms you sleep at night,
I 'll glide in cold betwixt, and seize my right:
And is 't not better, in your nuptial bed,
To have a living lover than a dead?

Almah. I can no longer bear to be accused,
As if what I could grant you, I refused.
My father's choice I never will dispute;
And he has chosen ere you moved your suit.
You know my case; if equal you can be,
Plead for yourself, and answer it for me.

Almanz. Then, madam, in that hope you bid me live;
I ask no more than you may justly give:
But in strict justice there may favour be,
And may I hope that you have that for me?

Almah. Why do you thus my secret thoughts pursue,
Which, known, hurt me, and cannot profit you?
Your knowledge but new troubles does prepare,
Like theirs who curious in their fortunes are.
To say, I could with more content be yours,
Tempts you to hope; but not that hope assures.
For since the king has right,
And favoured by my father in his suit,
It is a blossom which can bear no fruit.
Yet, if you dare attempt so hard a task,
May you succeed; you have my leave to ask.

Almanz. I can with courage now my hopes pursue,
Since I no longer have to combat you.
That did the greatest difficulty bring;
The rest are small, a father and a king!

Almah. Great souls discern not when the leap 's too wide,
Because they only view the farther side.
Whatever you desire, you think is near;
But, with more reason, the event I fear.

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Almanz. No; there is a necessity in fate,
Why still the brave bold man is fortunate:
He keeps his object ever full in sight,
And that assurance holds him firm and right.
True, 'tis a narrow path that leads to bliss,
But right before there is no precipice:
Fear makes men look aside, and then their
footing miss.

Almah. I do your merit all the right I can;
Admiring virtue in a private man:
I only wish the king may grateful be,
And that my father with my eyes may see.
Might I not make it as my last request,—
Since humble carriage suits a suppliant best,—
That you would somewhat of your fierceness
hide—
That inborn fire—I do not call it pride?

Almanz. Born, as I am, still to command, not sue,
Yet you shall see that I can beg for you;
And if your father will require a crown,
Let him but name the kingdom, 'tis his own.
I am, but while I please, a private man;
I have that soul which ~~empires first began.~~
From the dull crowd, ~~which every king~~ does lead,
I will pick out whom I will choose to head:
The best and bravest ~~souls I can select,~~
And on their conquered necks my ~~throne erect.~~

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

ABDALLA *alone, under the walls of the Albayzyn.*

Abdal. While she is mine, I have not yet
lost all,
But in her arms shall have a gentle fall:

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Blest in my love, although in war o'ercome,
I fly, like Antony from Actium,
To meet a better Cleopatra here.—
You of the watch! you of the watch! appear.
Sold. [*above.*] Who calls below? What 's your demand?
Abdal. 'Tis I:
Open the gate with speed; the foe is nigh.
Sold. What orders for admittance do you bring?
Abdal. Slave, my own orders: look, and know the king.
Sold. I know you; but my charge is so severe,
That none, without exception, enter here.
Abdal. Traitor, and rebel! thou shalt shortly see
Thy orders are not to extend to me.
Lyndar. [*above.*] What saucy slave so rudely does exclaim,
And brands my subject with a rebel's name?
Abdal. Dear Lyndaraxa, haste; the foes pursue.
Lyndar. My lord, the Prince Abdalla, is it you?
I scarcely can believe the words I hear;
Could you so coarsely treat my officer?
Abdal. He forced me; but the danger nearer draws:
When I am entered, you shall know the cause.
Lyndar. Entered! Why, have you any business here?
Abdal. I am pursued, the enemy is near.
Lyndar. Are you pursued, and do you thus delay
To save yourself? Make haste, my lord, away.
Abdal. Give me not cause to think you mock my grief:
What place have I, but this, for my relief?

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Lyndar. This favour does your handmaid much oblige,
But we are not provided for a siege:
My subjects few; and their provision thin;
The foe is strong without, we weak within.
This to my noble lord may seem unkind,
But he will weigh it in his princely mind;
And pardon her, who does assurance want
So much, she blushes when she cannot grant.
Abdal. Yes, you may blush; and you have cause to weep.
Is this the faith you promised me to keep?
Ah yet, if to a lover you will bring
No succour, give your succour to a king.
Lyndar. A king is he, whom nothing can withstand;
Who men and money can with ease command.
A king is he, whom fortune still does bless;
He is a king, who does a crown possess.
If you would have me think that you are he,
Produce to view your marks of sovereignty;
But if yourself alone for proof you bring,
You 're but a single person, not a king.
Abdal. Ungrateful maid, did I for this rebel?
I say no more; but I have loved too well.
Lyndar. Who but yourself did that rebellion move?
Did I e'er promise to receive your love?
Is it my fault you are not fortunate?
I love a king, but a poor rebel hate.
Abdal. Who follow fortune, still are in the right;
But let me be protected here this night.
Lyndar. The place to-morrow will be circled round;
And then no way will for your flight be found.

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Abdal. I hear my enemies just coming on;
[*Trampling within.*
Protect me but one hour till they are gone.
Lyndar. They 'll know you have been here; it cannot be;
That very hour you stay, will ruin me:
For if the foe behold our interview,
I shall be thought a rebel too, like you.
Haste hence; and, that your flight may prosperous prove,
I 'll recommend you to the powers above.
[*Exit* LYND. *from above.*
Abdal. She 's gone: Ah, faithless and ungrateful maid!——
I hear some tread; and fear I am betrayed.
I 'll to the Spanish king; and try if he,
To countenance his own right, will succour me:
There is more faith in Christian dogs, than thee.
[*Exit.*

Enter OZMYN, BENZAYDA, *and* ABENAMAR.

Benz. I wish
(To merit all these thanks) I could have said,
My pity only did his virtue aid;
'Twas pity, but 'twas of a love-sick maid.
His manly suffering my esteem did move;
That bred compassion, and compassion love.
Ozm. O blessing sold me at too cheap a rate!
My danger was the benefit of fate.
[*To his father.*
But that you may my fair deliverer know,
She was not only born our house's foe,
But to my death by powerful reasons led;
At least, in justice, she might wish me dead.
Aben. But why thus long do you her name conceal?
Ozm. To gain belief for what I now reveal:

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Even thus prepared, you scarce can think it true,
The saver of my life from Selin drew
Her birth; and was his sister whom I slew.
Aben. No more; it cannot, was not, must not be:
Upon my blessing, say not it was she.
The daughter of the only man I hate!
Two contradictions twisted in a fate!
Ozm. The mutual hate, which you and Selin bore,
Does but exalt her generous pity more.
Could she a brother's death forgive to me,
And cannot you forget her family?
Can you so ill requite the life I owe,
To reckon her, who gave it, still your foe?
It lends too great a lustre to her line,
To let her virtue ours so much outshine.
Aben. Thou gav'st her line the advantage which they have,
By meanly taking of the life they gave.
Grant that it did in her a pity show;
But would my son be pitied by a foe?
She has the glory of thy act defaced:
Thou kill'dst her brother; but she triumphs last:
Poorly for us our enmity would cease;
When we are beaten, we receive a peace.
Benz. If that be all in which you disagree,
I must confess 'twas Ozmyn conquered me.
Had I beheld him basely beg his life,
I should not now submit to be his wife;
But when I saw his courage death control,
I paid a secret homage to his soul;
And thought my cruel father much to blame,
Since Ozmyn's virtue his revenge did shame.
Aben. What constancy canst thou e'er hope to find
In that unstable, and soon conquered mind?

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What piety canst thou expect from her,
Who could forgive a brother's murderer?
Or, what obedience hop'st thou to be paid,
From one who first her father disobeyed?

Ozm. Nature, that bids us parents to obey,
Bids parents their commands by reason weigh;
And you her virtue by your praise did own,
Before you knew by whom the act was done.

Aben. Your reasons speak too much of insolence;
Her birth 's a crime past pardon or defence.
Know, that as Selin was not won by thee,
Neither will I by Selin's daughter be.
Leave her, or cease henceforth to be my son:
This is my will; and this I will have done.

[*Exit* ABEN.

Ozm. It is a murdering will,
That whirls along with an impetuous sway,
And, like chain-shot, sweeps all things in its way.
He does my honour want of duty call;
To that, and love, he has no right at all.

Benz. No, Ozmyn, no; it is a much less ill
To leave me, ~~than dispute a father's will~~:
If I had any title to your love,
Your father's ~~greater right does mine remove~~:
Your vows and faith I give you back again,
Since neither can be kept without a sin.

Ozm. Nothing but death my vows can give me back:
They are not yours to give, nor mine to take.

Benz. Nay, think not, though I could your vows resign,
My love or virtue could dispense with mine.
I would extinguish your unlucky fire,
To make you happy in some new desire:
I can preserve enough for me and you,
And love, and be unfortunate, for two.

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Ozm. In all that 's good and great
You vanquish me so fast, that in the end
I shall have nothing left me to defend.
From every post you force me to remove;
But let me keep my last entrenchment, love.
Benz. Love then, my Ozmyn; I will be content [*Giving her hand.*
To make you wretched by your own consent:
Live poor, despised, and banished for my sake,
And all the burden of my sorrows take;
For, as for me, in whatsoe'er estate,
While I have you, I must be fortunate.
Ozm. Thus then, secured of what we hold most dear,
(Each other's love) we 'll go—I know not where.
For where, alas, should we our flight begin?
The foe 's without; our parents are within.
Benz. I 'll fly to you, and you shall fly to me;
Our flight but to each other 's arms shall be.
To providence and chance permit the rest;
Let us but love enough, and we are blest.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter BOABDELIN, ABENAMAR, ABDELMELECH, *Guards:* ZULEMA *and* HAMET, *Prisoners.*

Abdelm. They are Lyndaraxa's brothers; for her sake,
Their lives and pardon my request I make.
Boab. Then, Zulema and Hamet, live; but know,
Your lives to Abdelmelech's suit you owe.
Zul. The grace received so much my hope exceeds,
That words come weak and short to answer deeds.

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You 've made a venture, sir, and time must show,
If this great mercy you did well bestow.
Boab. You, Abdelmelech, haste before 'tis night,
And close pursue my brother in his flight.
[*Exeunt* ABDELMELECH, ZULEMA, *and* HAMET.

Enter ALMANZOR, ALMAHIDE, *and* ESPERANZA.

But see, with Almahide
The brave Almanzor comes, whose conquering sword
The crown, it once took from me, has restored.
How can I recompense so great desert!
Almanz. I bring you, sir, performed in every part,
My promise made; your foes are fled or slain;
Without a rival, absolute you reign.
Yet though, in justice, this enough may be,
It is too little to be done by me:
I beg to go,
Where my own courage and your fortune calls,
To chase these misbelievers from our walls.
I cannot breathe within this narrow space;
My heart 's too big, and swells beyond the place.
Boab. You can perform, brave warrior, what you please;
Fate listens to your voice, and then decrees.
Now I no longer fear the Spanish powers;
Already we are free, and conquerors.
Almanz. Accept, great king, to-morrow, from my hand,
The captive head of conquered Ferdinand.
You shall not only what you lost regain,
But o'er the Biscayan mountains to the main,
Extend your sway, where never Moor did reign.
Aben. What, in another, vanity would seem,

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Appears but noble confidence in him;
No haughty boasting, but a manly pride;
A soul too fiery, and too great to guide:
He moves eccentric, like a wandering star,
Whose motion 's just, though 'tis not regular.

Boab. It is for you, brave man, and only you,
Greatly to speak, and yet more greatly do.
But, if your benefits too far extend,
I must be left ungrateful in the end:
Yet somewhat I would pay,
Before my debts above all reckoning grow,
To keep me from the shame of what I owe.
But you
Are conscious to yourself of such desert,
That of your gift I fear to offer part.

Almanz. When I shall have declared my high request,
So much presumption there will be confest,
That you will find your gifts I do not shun;
But rather much o'er-rate the service done.

Boab. Give wing to your desires, and let 'em fly,
Secure they cannot mount a pitch too high.
So bless me, Allah, both in peace and war,
As I accord, whate'er your wishes are.

Almanz. Emboldened by the promise of a prince, [*Putting one knee to the ground.*
I ask this lady now with confidence.

Boab. You ask the only thing I cannot grant.
[*The King and* ABENAMAR *look amazedly on each other.*
But, as a stranger, you are ignorant
Of what by public fame my subjects know;
She is my mistress.

Aben. —And my daughter too.

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Almanz. Believe, old man, that I her father knew:
What else should make Almanzor kneel to you?
Nor doubt, sir, but your right to her was known:
For had you had no claim but love alone,
I could produce a better of my own.
Almah. [*softly to him.*] Almanzor, you forget my last request:
Your words have too much haughtiness expressed.
Is this the humble way you were to move?
Almanz. [*to her.*] I was too far transported by my love.
Forgive me; for I had not learned to sue
To anything before, but Heaven and you.—
Sir, at your feet, I make it my request—
[*To the King.*
[*First line kneeling: second, rising, and boldly.*
Though, without boasting, I deserve her best;
For you her love with gaudy titles sought,
But I her heart with blood and dangers bought.
Boab. The blood, which you have shed in her defence,
Shall have in time a fitting recompence:
Or, if you think your services delayed,
Name but your price, and you shall soon be paid.
Almanz. My price!—why, king, you do not think you deal
With one who sets his services to sale?
Reserve your gifts for those who gifts regard;
And know, I think myself above reward.
Boab. Then sure you are some godhead; and our care
Must be to come with incense and with prayer.
Almanz. As little as you think yourself obliged,
You would be glad to do't, when next besieged.

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But I am pleased there should be nothing due;
For what I did was for myself, not you.
Boab. You with contempt on meaner gifts look down;
And, aiming at my queen, disdain my crown.
That crown, restored, deserves no recompence,
Since you would rob the fairest jewel thence.
Dare not henceforth ungrateful me to call;
Whate'er I owed you, this has cancelled all.
Almanz. I 'll call thee thankless, king, and perjured both:
Thou swor'st by Allah, and hast broke thy oath.
But thou dost well; thou tak'st the cheapest way;
Not to own services thou canst not pay.
Boab. My patience more than pays thy service past;
But now this insolence shall be thy last.
Hence from my sight! and take it as a grace,
Thou liv'st, and art but banished from the place.
Almanz. Where'er I go, there can no exile be;
But from Almanzor's sight I banish thee:
I will not now, if thou wouldst beg me, stay;
But I will take my Almahide away.
Stay thou with all thy subjects here; but know,
We leave thy city empty when we go.
[*Takes* ALMAHIDE'S *hand.*
Boab. Fall on; take; kill the traitor.
[*The Guards fall on him; he makes at the King through the midst of them, and falls upon him; they disarm him, and rescue the King.*
Almanz. ——Base and poor,
Blush that thou art Almanzor's conqueror.
[ALMAHIDE *wrings her hands, then turns and veils her face.*
Farewell, my Almahide!

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Life of itself will go, now thou art gone,
Like flies in winter, when they lose the sun.
[ABENAMAR *whispers the King a little, then speaks aloud.*
Aben. Revenge, and taken so secure a way,
Are blessings which Heaven sends not every day.
Boab. I will at leisure now revenge my wrong;
And, traitor, thou shalt feel my vengeance long:
Thou shalt not die just at thy own desire,
But see my nuptials, and with rage expire.
Almanz. Thou darest not marry her while I 'm in sight:
With a bent brow thy priest and thee I 'll fright;
And in that scene,
Which all thy hopes and wishes should content,
The thought of me shall make thee impotent.
[*He is led off by Guards.*
Boab. As some fair tulip, by a storm oppressed,
[*To* ALMAH.
Shrinks up, and folds its silken arms to rest;
And, bending to the blast, all pale and dead,
Hears, from within, the wind sing round its head,—
So, shrouded up, your beauty disappears:
Unveil, my love, and lay aside your fears.
The storm, that caused your fright, is passed and done.
[ALMAHIDE *unveiling, and looking round for* ALMANZOR.
Almah. So flowers peep out too soon, and miss the sun. [*Turning from him.*
Boab. What mystery in this strange behaviour lies?
Almah. Let me for ever hide these guilty eyes,
Which lighted my Almanzor to his tomb;
Or, let them blaze, to show me there a room.

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Boab. Heaven lent their lustre for a nobler end;
A thousand torches must their light attend,
To lead you to a temple and a crown.
Why does my fairest Almahide frown?
Am I less pleasing than I was before,
Or, is the insolent Almanzor more?

Almah. I justly own that I some pity have,
Not for the insolent, but for the brave.

Aben. Though to your king your duty you neglect,
Know, Almahide, I look for more respect:
And, if a parent's charge your mind can move,
Receive the blessing of a monarch's love.

Almah. Did he my freedom to his life prefer,
And shall I wed Almanzor's murderer?
No, sir; I cannot to your will submit;
Your way 's too rugged for my tender feet.

Aben. You must be driven where you refuse to go;
And taught, by force, your happiness to know.

Almah. To force me, sir, is much unworthy you, [*Smiling scornfully.*
And, when you would, impossible to do.
If force could bend me, you might think, with shame,
That I debased the blood from whence I came.
My soul is soft, which you may gently lay
In your loose palm; but, when 'tis pressed to stay,
Like water, it deludes your grasp, and slips away.

Boab. I find I must revoke what I decreed:
Almanzor's death my nuptials must precede.
Love is a magic which the lover ties;
But charms still end when the magician dies.
Go; let me hear my hated rival 's dead;
[*To his Guard.*
And, to convince my eyes, bring back his head.

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Almah. Go on: I wish no other way to prove
That I am worthy of Almanzor's love.
We will in death, at least, united be:
I 'll show you I can die as well as he.
Boab. What should I do! when equally I dread
Almanzor living and Almanzor dead!——
Yet, by your promise, you are mine alone.
Almah. How dare you claim my faith, and break your own?
Aben. This for your virtue is a weak defence:
No second vows can with your first dispense.
Yet, since the king did to Almanzor swear,
And in his death ungrateful may appear,
He ought, in justice, first to spare his life,
And then to claim your promise as his wife.
Almah. Whate'er my secret inclinations be,
To this, since honour ties me, I agree:
Yet I declare, and to the world will own,
That, far from seeking, I would shun the throne,
And with Almanzor lead a humble life:
There is a private greatness in his wife.
Boab. That little love I have, I hardly buy;
You give my rival all, while you deny:
Yet, Almahide, to let you see your power,
Your loved Almanzor shall be free this hour.
You are obeyed; but 'tis so great a grace,
That I could wish me in my rival's place.
[*Exeunt King and* ABENAMAR.
Almah. How blessed was I before this fatal day,
When all I knew of love, was to obey!
'Twas life becalmed, without a gentle breath;
Though not so cold, yet motionless as death.
A heavy quiet state; but love, all strife,
All rapid, is the hurricane of life.

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Had love not shown me, I had never seen
An excellence beyond Boabdelin.
I had not, aiming higher, lost my rest;
But with a vulgar good been duly blest:
But, in Almanzor, having seen what 's rare,
Now I have learnt too sharply to compare;
And, like a favourite quickly in disgrace,
Just knew the value ere I lost the place.

To her ALMANZOR, *bound and guarded.*

Almanz. I see the end for which I 'm hither sent,
To double, by your sight, my punishment.
There is a shame in bonds I cannot bear;
Far more than death, to meet your eyes I fear.
Almah. That shame of long continuance shall not be: [*Unbinding him.*
The king, at my entreaty, sets you free.
Almanz. The king! my wonder 's greater than before;
How did he dare my freedom to restore?
He like some captive lion uses me;
He runs away before he sets me free,
And takes a sanctuary in his court:
I 'll rather lose my life than thank him for 't.
Almah. If any subject for your thanks there be,
The king expects them not, you owe them me.
Our freedoms through each other's hands have past;
You give me my revenge in winning last.
Almanz. Then fate commodiously for me has done;
To lose mine there where I would have it won.
Almah. Almanzor, you too soon will understand,
That what I win is on another's hand.*

* [*i.e.* for another's advantage.—ED.]

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The king (who doomed you to a cruel fate)
Gave to my prayers both his revenge and hate;
But at no other price would rate your life,
Than my consent and oath to be his wife.
Almanz. Would you, to save my life, my love betray?
Here; take me; bind me; carry me away;
Kill me! I 'll kill you if you disobey.
[*To the Guards.*
Almah. That absolute command your love does give,
I take, and charge you by that power to live.
Almanz. When death, the last of comforts, you refuse,
Your power, like heaven upon the damned, you use;
You force me in my being to remain,
To make me last, and keep me fresh for pain.
When all my joys are gone,
What cause can I for living longer give,
But a dull, lazy habitude to live?
Almah. Rash men, like you, and impotent of will,
Give chance no time to turn, but urge her still;
She would repent; you push the quarrel on,
And once because she went, she must be gone.
Almanz. She shall not turn; what is it she can do,
To recompense me for the loss of you?
Almah. Heaven will reward your worth some better way:
At least, for me, you have but lost one day.
Nor is 't a real loss which you deplore;
You sought a heart that was engaged before.
'Twas a swift love which took you in his way;
Flew only through your heart, but made no stay:

'Twas but a dream, where truth had not a place;
A scene of fancy, moved so swift a pace,
And shifted, that you can but think it was;—
Let, then, the short vexatious vision pass.
Almanz. My joys, indeed, are dreams; but not my pain:
'Twas a swift ruin, but the marks remain.
When some fierce fire lays goodly buildings waste,
Would you conclude
There had been none, because the burning 's past?
Almah. It was your fault that fire seized all your breast;
You should have blown up some to save the rest:
But 'tis, at worst, but so consumed by fire,
As cities are, that by their falls rise higher.
Build love a nobler temple in my place;
You 'll find the fire has but enlarged your space.
Almanz. Love has undone me; I am grown so poor,
I sadly view the ground I had before,
But want a stock, and ne'er can build it more.
Almah. Then say what charity I can allow;
I would contribute if I knew but how.
Take friendship; or, if that too small appear,
Take love,—which sisters may to brothers bear.
Almanz. A sister's love! that is so palled a thing,
What pleasure can it to a lover bring?
'Tis like thin food to men in fevers spent;
Just keeps alive, but gives no nourishment.
What hopes, what fears, what transports can it move?
'Tis but the ghost of a departed love.
Almah. You, like some greedy cormorant, devour
All my whole life can give you in an hour.
What more I can do for you is to die,
And that must follow, if you this deny.

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Since I gave up my love, that you might live,
You, in refusing life, my sentence give.
Almanz. Far from my breast be such an impious thought!
Your death would lose the quiet mine had sought.
I 'll live ~~for you~~, in spite of misery;
But you shall grant ~~that I had rather die.~~
I 'll be so wretched, filled with such despair,
That you shall see, to live was more to dare.
Almah. Adieu, then, O my soul 's far better part!
Your image sticks so close,
That the blood follows from my rending heart.
A last farewell!
For, since the last must come, the rest are vain,
Like gasps in death, which but prolong our pain.
But, since the king is now a part of me,
Cease from henceforth to be his enemy.
Go now, for pity go! for, if you stay,
I fear I shall have something still to say.
Thus——I for ever shut you from my sight.
[*Veils.*
Almanz. Like one thrust out in a cold winter's night,
Yet shivering underneath your gate I stay;
One look——I cannot go before 'tis day.——
[*She beckons him to be gone.*
Not one——Farewell: Whate'er my sufferings be
Within, I 'll speak farewell as loud as she:
I will not be outdone in constancy.——
[*She turns her back.*
Then like a dying conqueror I go;
At least I have looked last upon my foe.
I go——but if too heavily I move,
I walk encumbered with a weight of love.

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Fain I would leave the thought of you behind,
But still, the more I cast you from my mind,
You dash, like water, back, when thrown against
the wind. [*Exit.*

As he goes off, the King meets him with ABENAMAR; *they stare at each other without saluting.*

Boab. With him go all my fears: A guard there wait,
And see him safe without the city gate.

To them ABDELMELECH.

Now, Abdelmelech, is my brother dead?
Abdelm. Th' usurper to the Christian camp is fled;
Whom as Granada's lawful king they own,
And vow, by force, to seat him on the throne.
Meantime the rebels in the Albayzyn rest;
Which is in Lyndaraxa's name possest.
Boab. Haste and reduce it instantly by force.
Abdelm. First give me leave to prove a milder course.
She will, perhaps, on summons yield the place.
Boab. We cannot to your suit refuse her grace.
[*One enters hastily, and whispers*
ABENAMAR.
Aben. How fortune persecutes this hoary head!
My Ozmyn is with Selin's daughter fled.
But he's no more my son:
My hate shall like a Zegry him pursue,
Till I take back what blood from me he drew.
Boab. Let war and vengeance be to-morrow's care;
But let us to the temple now repair.
A thousand torches make the mosque more bright:
This must be mine and Almahide's night.

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Hence, ye importunate affairs of state,
You should not tyrannise on love, but wait.
Had life no love, none would for business live;
Yet still from love the largest part we give;
And must be forced, in empire's weary toil,
To live long wretched, to be pleased a while.

[*Exeunt.*

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EPILOGUE.

Success, which can no more than beauty last,
Makes our sad poet mourn your favours past:
For, since without desert he got a name,
He fears to lose it now with greater shame.
Fame, like a little mistress of the town,
Is gained with ease, but then she 's lost as soon:
For, as those tawdry misses, soon or late,
Jilt such as keep them at the highest rate;
And oft the lacquey, or the brawny clown,
Gets what is hid in the loose-bodied gown,—
So, Fame is false to all that keep her long;
And turns up to the fop that 's brisk and young.
Some wiser poet now would leave fame first;
But elder wits are, like old lovers, cursed:
Who, when the vigour of their youth is spent,
Still grow more fond, as they grow impotent.
This, some years hence, our poet's case may prove;
But yet, he hopes, he 's young enough to love.
When forty comes, if e'er he live to see
That wretched, fumbling age of poetry,
'Twill be high time to bid his Muse adieu:—
Well may he please himself, but never you.
Till then, he 'll do as well as he began,
And hopes you will not find him less a man.
Think him not duller for this year's delay;
He was prepared, the women were away;*
And men, without their parts, can hardly play.
If they, through sickness, seldom did appear,
Pity the virgins of each theatre:
For, at both houses, 'twas a sickly year!
And pity us, your servants, to whose cost,
In one such sickness, nine whole months are lost.

---

* [The women were Nell Gwyn, Mrs. James, and Mrs. Davis, all of whom were "away" in 1669, for reasons. The "year's delay" dates from the appearance of *Tyrannic Love*.—Ed.]

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Their stay, he fears, has ruined what he writ:
Long waiting both disables love and wit.
They thought they gave him leisure to do well;
But, when they forced him to attend, he fell!
Yet, though he much has failed, he begs, to-day,
You will excuse his unperforming play:
Weakness sometimes great passion does express;
He had pleased better, had he loved you less.

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ALMANZOR AND ALMAHIDE:

OR, THE

CONQUEST OF GRANADA

BY THE

SPANIARDS.

A TRAGEDY.

THE SECOND PART.

——*Stimulos dedit æmula virtus.* LUCAN.

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[Almanzor and Almahide, or The Conquest of Granada. The Second Part. As it is acted at the Theatre Royal. Written by John Dryden, Servant to His Majesty.—— *Stimulos dedit æmula virtus.* LUCAN.

In the Savoy, Printed by T. N. for Henry Herringman, and are to be sold at the Anchor, in the Lower Walk of the New Exchange, 1672.—ED.]

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PROLOGUE

TO THE SECOND PART.

THEY, who write ill, and they, who ne'er durst write,
Turn critics, out of mere revenge and spite:
A playhouse gives them fame; and up there starts,
From a mean fifth-rate wit, a man of parts.
(So common faces on the stage appear;
We take them in, and they turn beauties here.)
Our author fears those critics as his fate;
And those he fears, by consequence must hate,
For they the traffic of all wit invade,
As scriveners draw away the bankers' trade.
Howe'er the poet's safe enough to-day.
They cannot censure an unfinished play.
But, as when vizard-mask appears in pit,
Straight every man, who thinks himself a wit,
Perks up, and, managing his comb with grace,
With his white wig sets off his nut-brown face;
That done, bears up th' prize, and views each limb,
To know her by her rigging and her trim;
Then, the whole noise of fops to wagers go,—
"Pox on her, 't must be she;" and—"Damme, no!"—
Just so, I prophesy, these wits to-day
Will blindly guess at our imperfect play;
With what new plots our Second Part is filled,
Who must be kept alive, and who be killed.
And as those vizard-masks maintain that fashion,
To soothe and tickle sweet imagination;
So our dull poet keeps you on with masking,
To make you think there's something worth your asking.
But, when 'tis shown, that, which does now delight you,
Will prove a dowdy, with a face to fright you.

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ALMANZOR AND ALMAHIDE,

OR, THE

CONQUEST OF GRANADA

BY THE

SPANIARDS.

THE SECOND PART.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Camp.*

Enter KING FERDINAND, QUEEN ISABELLA, ALONZO D'AGUILAR; *Attendants, Men and Women.*

K. Ferd. At length the time is come, when Spain shall be
From the long yoke of Moorish tyrants free.
All causes seem to second our design,
And heaven and earth in their destruction join.
When empire in its childhood first appears,
A watchful fate o'ersees its tender years;
Till, grown more strong, it thrusts and stretches out,
And elbows all the kingdoms round about:
The place thus made for its first breathing free,
It moves again for ease and luxury;

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Till, swelling by degrees, it has possessed
The greater space, and now crowds up the rest;
When, from behind, there starts some petty state,
And pushes on its now unwieldy fate;
Then down the precipice of time it goes,
And sinks in minutes, which in ages rose.

Q. Isabel. Should bold Columbus in his search succeed,
And find those beds in which bright metals breed;
Tracing the sun, who seems to steal away,
That, miser-like, he might alone survey
The wealth which he in western mines did lay,—
Not all that shining ore could give my heart
The joy, this conquered kingdom will impart;
Which, rescued from the misbelievers' hands,
Shall now, at once, shake off its double bands:
At once to freedom and true faith restored,
Its old religion and its ancient lord.

K. Ferd. By that assault which last we made, I find,
Their courage is with their success declined:
Almanzor's absence now they dearly buy,
Whose conduct crowned their arms with victory.

Alonzo. Their king himself did their last sally guide;
I saw him, glistering in bright armour, ride
To break a lance in honour of his bride:
But other thoughts now fill his anxious breast;
Care of his crown his love has dispossest.

To them ABDALLA.

Q. Isabel. But see, the brother of the Moorish king:
He seems some news of great import to bring.

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K. Ferd. He brings a specious title to our side:
Those, who would conquer, must their foes divide.
Abdal. Since to my exile you have pity shown,
And given me courage yet to hope a throne;
While you without our common foes subdue,
I am not wanting to myself or you;
But have, within, a faction still alive,
Strong to assist, and secret to contrive,
And watching each occasion to foment
The people's fears into a discontent;
Which, from Almanzor's loss, before were great,
And now are doubled by their late defeat:
These letters from their chiefs the news assures.
[*Give letters to the* KING.
K. Ferd. Be mine the honour, but the profit yours.

To them the DUKE OF ARCOS, *with* OZMYN *and* BENZAYDA, *Prisoners.*

K. Ferd. That tertia* of Italians did you guide,
To take their post upon the river side?
D. Arcos. All are according to your orders placed:
My cheerful soldiers their entrenchments haste;
The Murcian foot hath ta'en the upper ground,
And now the city is beleaguered round.
K. Ferd. Why is not then their leader here again?
D. Arcos. The master of Alcantara is slain;
But he, who slew him, here before you stands:
It is that Moor whom you behold in bands.
K. Ferd. A braver man I had not in my host;
His murderer shall not long his conquest boast:

* [A regiment of infantry.—ED.]

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But, Duke of Arcos, say, how was he slain ?
D. Arcos. Our soldiers marched together on the plain ;
We two rode on, and left them far behind,
'Till, coming where we found the valley wind,
We saw these Moors ; who, swiftly as they could,
Ran on to gain the covert of the wood.
This we observed ; and, having crossed their way,
The lady, out of breath, was forced to stay :
The man then stood, and straight his falchion drew ;
Then told us, we in vain did those pursue,
Whom their ill fortune to despair did drive,
And yet, whom we should never take alive.
Neglecting this, the master straight spurred on ;
But the active Moor his horse's shock did shun,
And, ere his rider from his reach could go,
Finished the combat with one deadly blow.
I, to revenge my friend, prepared to fight ;
But now our foremost men were come in sight,
Who soon would have despatched him on the place,
Had I not saved him from a death so base,
And brought him to attend your royal doom.
K. Ferd. A manly face, and in his age's bloom ;
But, to content the soldiers, he must die :
Go, see him executed instantly.
Q. Isabel. Stay ; I would learn his name before he go :
You, Prince Abdalla, may the prisoner know.
Abdal. Ozmyn 's his name, and he deserves his fate ;
His father heads that faction which I hate :
But much I wonder, that I with him see
The daughter of his mortal enemy.

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Benz. 'Tis true, by Ozmyn's sword my brother fell;
But 'twas a death he merited too well.
I know a sister should excuse his fault;
But you know too, that Ozmyn's death he sought.
Abdal. Our prophet has declared, by the event,
That Ozmyn is reserved for punishment;
For, when he thought his guilt from danger clear,
He, by new crimes, is brought to suffer here.
Benz. In love, or pity, if a crime you find,
We too have sinned above all humankind.
Ozm. Heaven in my punishment has done a grace;
I could not suffer in a better place:
That I should die by Christians it thought good,
To save your father's guilt, who sought my blood.
[*To her.*
Benz. Fate aims so many blows to make us fall,
That 'tis in vain to think to ward them all:
And, where misfortunes great and many are,
Life grows a burden, and not worth our care.
Ozm. I cast it from me, like a garment torn,
Ragged, and too indecent to be worn:
Besides, there is contagion in my fate,
[*To* BENZ.
It makes your life too much unfortunate.—
But, since her faults are not allied to mine,
In her protection let your favour shine.
To you, great queen, I make this last request,
(Since pity dwells in every royal breast)
Safe, in your care, her life and honour be:
It is a dying lover's legacy.
Benz. Cease, Ozmyn, cease so vain a suit to move;
I did not give you on those terms my love.

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Leave me the care of me; for, when you go,
My love will soon instruct me what to do.
Q. Isabel. Permit me, sir, these lovers' doom to give:
My sentence is, they shall together live.
The courts of Kings
To all distressed should sanctuaries be,
But most to lovers in adversity.
Castile and Arragon,
Which long against each other war did move,
My plighted lord and I have joined by love;
And, if to add this conquest Heaven thinks good,
I would not have it stained with lovers' blood.
K. Ferd. Whatever Isabella shall command
Shall always be a law to Ferdinand.
Benz. The frowns of fate we will no longer fear.
Ill fate, great queen, can never find us here.
Q. Isabel. Your thanks some other time I will receive;
Henceforward safe in my protection live.
Granada is for noble loves renowned:
Her best defence is in her lovers found.
Love 's an heroic passion, which can find
No room in any base degenerate mind:
It kindles all the soul with honour's fire,
To make the lover worthy his desire.
Against such heroes I success should fear,
Had we not too an host of lovers here.
An army of bright beauties come with me;
Each lady shall her servant's actions see:
The fair and brave on each side shall contest;
And they shall overcome, who love the best.
[*Exeunt.*

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SCENE II.—*The Alhambra.*

Enter ZULEMA.

Zul. True, they have pardoned me; but do they know
What folly 'tis to trust a pardoned foe?
A blush remains in a forgiven face:
It wears the silent tokens of disgrace.
Forgiveness to the injured does belong;
But they ne'er pardon, who have done the wrong,
My hopeful fortunes lost! and, what 's above
All I can name or think, my ruined love!
Feigned honesty shall work me into trust,
And seeming penitence conceal my lust.
Let heaven's great eye of Providence now take
One day of rest, and ever after wake.

Enter BOABDELIN, ABENAMAR, *and Guards.*

Boab. Losses on losses! as if Heaven decreed
Almanzor's valour should alone succeed.
Aben. Each sally we have made, since he is gone,
Serves but to pull our speedy ruin on.
Boab. Of all mankind, the heaviest fate he bears,
Who the last crown of sinking empire wears.
No kindly planet of his birth took care:
Heaven's outcast, and the dross of every star!
[*A tumultuous noise within.*

Enter ABDELMELECH.

What new misfortune do these cries presage?
Abdelm. They are the effects of the mad people's rage.
All in despair tumultuously they swarm:
The fairest streets already take the alarm;

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The needy creep from cellars under ground;
To them new cries from tops of garrets sound;
The aged from the chimneys seek the cold;
And wives from windows helpless infants hold.
Boab. See what the many-headed beast demands.— [*Exit* ABDELM.
Cursed is that king, whose honour's in their hands.
In senates, either they too slowly grant,
Or saucily refuse to aid my want;
And, when their thrift has ruined me in war,
They call their insolence my want of care.
Aben. Cursed be their leaders, who that rage foment,
And veil, with public good, their discontent:
They keep the people's purses in their hands,
And hector kings to grant their wild demands;
But to each lure, a court throws out, descend,
And prey on those they promised to defend.
Zul. Those kings, who to their wild demands consent,
Teach others the same way to discontent.
Freedom in subjects is not, nor can be;
But still, to please them, we must call them free.
Propriety, which they their idol make,
Or law, or law's interpreters, can shake.
Aben. The name of commonwealth is popular;
But there the people their own tyrants are.
Boab. But kings, who rule with limited command,
Have players' sceptres put into their hand.
Power has no balance, one side still weighs down,
And either hoists the commonwealth or crown;
And those, who think to set the scale more right,
By various turnings but disturb the weight.
Aben. While people tug for freedom, kings for power,
Both sink beneath some foreign conqueror:

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Then subjects find too late they were unjust,
And want that power of kings, they durst not trust.

To them ABDELMELECH.

Abdelm. The tumult now is high, and dangerous grown:
The people talk of rendering up the town;
And swear that they will force the king's consent.
Boab. What counsel can this rising storm prevent?
Abdelm. Their fright to no persuasions will give ear:
There 's a deaf madness in a people's fear.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Their fury now a middle course does take;
To yield the town, or call Almanzor back.
Boab. I 'll rather call my death.—
Go, and bring up my guards to my defence:
I 'll punish this outrageous insolence.
Aben. Since blind opinion does their reason sway,
You must submit to cure them their own way.
You to their fancies physic must apply;
Give them that chief on whom they most rely.
Under Almanzor prosperously they fought;
Almanzor, therefore, must with prayers be brought.

Enter a second Messenger.

2 *Mess.* Haste all you can their fury to assuage:
You are not safe from their rebellious rage.

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Enter a third Messenger.

3 *Mess.* This minute, if you grant not their desire,
They 'll seize your person, and your palace fire.
Abdelm. Your danger, sir, admits of no delay.
Boab. In tumults people reign, and kings obey.—
Go and appease them with the vow I make,
That they shall have their loved Almanzor back.
[*Exit* ABDEL.
Almanzor has the ascendant o'er my fate;
I 'm forced to stoop to one I fear and hate:
Disgraced, distressed, in exile, and alone,
He 's greater than a monarch on his throne:
Without a realm, a royalty he gains;
Kings are the subjects over whom he reigns.
[*A shout of acclamations within.*
Aben. These shouts proclaim the people satisfied.
Boab. We for another tempest must provide.
To promise his return as I was loth,
So I want power now to perform my oath.
Ere this, for Afric he is sailed from Spain.
Aben. The adverse winds his passage yet detain;
I heard, last night, his equipage did stay
At a small village, short of Malaga.
Boab. Abenamar, this evening thither haste;
Desire him to forget his usage past:
Use all your rhetoric, promise, flatter, pray.

To them ALMAHIDE, *attended.*

Aben. Good fortune shows you yet a surer way:
Nor prayers nor promises his mind will move;
'Tis inaccessible to all, but love.

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Boab. Oh, thou hast roused a thought within
my breast,
That will for ever rob me of my rest.
Ah jealousy, how cruel is thy sting!
I, in Almanzor, a loved rival bring!
And now, I think, it is an equal strife,
If I my crown should hazard, or my wife.
Where, marriage, is thy cure, which husbands
boast,
That in possession their desire is lost?
Or why have I alone that wretched taste,
Which, gorged and glutted, does with hunger
last?
Custom and duty cannot set me free,
Even sin itself has not a charm for me.
Of married lovers I am sure the first,
And nothing but a king could be so curst.
Almah. What sadness sits upon your royal
heart?
Have you a grief, and must not I have part?
All creatures else a time of love possess;
Man only clogs with cares his happiness:
And, while he should enjoy his part of bliss,
With thoughts of what may be, destroys what is.
Boab. You guess aright; I am oppressed with
grief,
And 'tis from you that I must seek relief.
[*To the company.*
Leave us; to sorrow there 's a reverence due:
Sad kings, like suns eclipsed, withdraw from view.
[*The Attendants go off, and chairs are set for the King and Queen.*
Almah. So, two kind turtles, when a storm is
nigh,
Look up, and see it gathering in the sky:
Each calls his mate, to shelter in the groves,
Leaving, in murmur, their unfinished loves

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Perched on some drooping branch, they sit alone,
And coo, and hearken to each other's moan.
Boab. Since, Almahide, you seem so kind a wife, [*Taking her by the hand.*
What would you do to save a husband's life?
Almah. When fate calls on that hard necessity,
I 'll suffer death, rather than you shall die.
Boab. Suppose your country should in danger be;
What would you undertake to set it free?
Almah. It were too little to resign my breath:
My own free hand should give me nobler death.
Boab. That hand, which would so much for glory do,
Must yet do more; for it must kill me too.
You must kill me, for that dear country's sake;
Or, what 's all one, must call Almanzor back.
Almah. I see to what your speech you now direct;
Either my love or virtue you suspect.
But know, that, when my person I resigned,
I was too noble not to give my mind.
No more the shadow of Almanzor fear;
I have no room, but for your image, here.
Boab. This, Almahide, would make me cease to mourn,
Were that Almanzor never to return:
But now my fearful people mutiny;
Their clamours call Almanzor back, not I.
Their safety, through my ruin, I pursue;
He must return, and must be brought by you.
Almah. That hour, when I my faith to you did plight,
I banished him for ever from my sight.
His banishment was to my virtue due;
Not that I feared him for myself, but you.

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My honour had preserved me innocent:
But I would,* your suspicion to prevent;
Which, since I see augmented in your mind,
I yet more reason for his exile find.

Boab. To your entreaties he will yield alone,
And on your doom depend my life and throne.
No longer, therefore, my desires withstand;
Or, if desires prevail not, my command.

Almah. In his return, too sadly I foresee
The effects of your returning jealousy.
But your command I prize above my life;
'Tis sacred to a subject and a wife:
If I have power, Almanzor shall return.

Boab. Cursed be that fatal hour when I was born! [*Letting go her hand, and starting up.*
You love, you love him; and that love reveal,
By your too quick consent to his repeal.
My jealousy had but too just a ground;
And now you stab into my former wound.

Almah. This sudden change I do not understand.
Have you so soon forgot your own command?

Boab. Grant that I did the unjust injunction lay,
You should have loved me more than to obey.
I know you did this mutiny design;
But I 'll your love-plot quickly countermine.
Let my crown go; he never shall return;
I, like a phœnix, in my nest will burn.

Almah. You please me well, that in one common fate
You wrap yourself, and me, and all your state.

---

* [A singular construction, grammatically explicable in two ways, either by supplying [banish him] or by taking "would" as = "was determined."—Ed.]

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Let us no more of proud Almanzor hear:
'Tis better once to die, than still to fear;
And better many times to die, than be
Obliged, past payment, to an enemy.
Boab. 'Tis better; but you wives have still one way:
Whene'er your husbands are obliged, you pay.
Almah. Thou, Heaven, who know'st it, judge my innocence!—
You, sir, deserve not I should make defence.
Yet, judge my virtue by that proof I gave,
When I submitted to be made your slave.
Boab. If I have been suspicious or unkind,
Forgive me; many cares distract my mind:
Love, and a crown!
Two such excuses no one man e'er had;
And each of them enough to make me mad:
But now my reason reassumes its throne,
And finds no safety when Almanzor's gone.
Send for him then; I'll be obliged, and sue;
'Tis a less evil than to part with you.
I leave you to your thoughts; but love me still!
Forgive my passion, and obey my will.
[*Exit* BOABDELIN.

ALMAHIDE *sola.*

My jealous lord will soon to rage return;
That fire, his fear rakes up,* does inward burn.
But Heaven, which made me great, has chose for me,
I must the oblation for my people be.
I'll cherish honour, then, and life despise;
What is not pure, is not for sacrifice.

* [Not in the usual sense of "stirring up," but = "rakes the ashes over," "banks up."—ED.]

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Yet for Almanzor I in secret mourn!
Can virtue, then, admit of his return?
Yes; for my love I will by virtue square;
My heart's not mine, but all my actions are.
I 'll like Almanzor act; and dare to be
As haughty, and as wretched too, as he.
What will he think is in my message meant?
I scarcely understand my own intent:
But, silkworm-like, so long within have wrought,
That I am lost in my own web of thought.
[*Exit* ALMAHIDE.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Wood.*

Enter OZMYN *and* BENZAYDA.

Ozm. 'Tis true, that our protection here has been
The effect of honour in the Spanish queen;
But, while I as a friend continue here,
I to my country must a foe appear.
Benz. Think not, my Ozmyn, that we here remain
As friends, but prisoners to the power of Spain.
Fortune dispenses with your country's right;
But you desert your honour in your flight.
Ozm. I cannot leave you here, and go away;
My honour's glad of a pretence to stay.
[*A noise within,*—Follow, follow, follow!—

Enter SELIN, *his sword drawn, as pursued.*

Selin. I am pursued, and now am spent and done;
My limbs suffice me not with strength to run.

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And, if I could, alas! what can I save?
A year, the dregs of life too, from the grave.
[*Sits down on the ground.*
Here will I sit, and here attend my fate,
With the same hoary majesty and state,
As Rome's old senate for the Gauls did wait.
Benz. It is my father; and he seems distressed.
Ozm. My honour bids me succour the oppressed;
That life he sought, for his I 'll freely give;
We 'll die together, or together live.
Benz. I 'll call more succour, since the camp is near,
And fly on all the wings of love and fear.
[*Exit* BENZ.

Enter ABENAMAR, *and four or five Moors. He looks and finds* SELIN.

Aben. You 've lived, and now behold your latest hour.
Selin. I scorn your malice, and defy your power.
A speedy death is all I ask you now;
And that 's a favour you may well allow.
Ozm. [*showing himself.*] Who gives you death, shall give it first to me;
Fate cannot separate our destiny.—
[*Knows his father.*
My father here! then Heaven itself has laid
The snare, in which my virtue is betrayed.
Aben. Fortune, I thank thee! thou hast kindly done,
To bring me back that fugitive, my son;
In arms too? fighting for my enemy!—
I 'll do a Roman justice,—thou shalt die!
Ozm. I beg not you my forfeit life would save;
Yet add one minute to that breath you gave.

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I disobeyed you, and deserved my fate;
But bury in my grave two houses' hate.
Let Selin live; and see your justice done
On me, while you revenge him for his son:
Your mutual malice in my death may cease,
And equal loss persuade you both to peace.

Aben. Yes, justice shall be done on him and thee.—
Haste, and despatch them both immediately.
[*To a soldier.*

Ozm. If you have honour,—since you nature want,—
For your own sake my last petition grant;
And kill not a disarmed, defenceless foe,
Whose death your cruelty, or fear, will show.
My father cannot do an act so base:——
My father!—I mistake;—I meant, who was.

Aben. Go, then, despatch him first who was my son!

Ozm. Swear but to save his life, I 'll yield my own.

Aben. Nor tears, nor prayers, thy life, or his, shall buy.

Ozm. Then, sir, Benzayda's father shall not die!— [*Putting himself before* SELIN.
And, since he 'll want defence when I am gone,
I will, to save his life, defend my own.

Aben. This justice, parricides, like thee, should have!—

[ABEN. *and his party attack them both.* OZM. *parries his father's thrusts, and thrusts at the others.*

Enter BENZAYDA, *with* ABDAILLA, *the Duke of* ARCOS, *and Spaniards.*

Benz. O, help my father! and my Ozmyn save!

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Abdal. Villains, that death you have deserved is near!

Ozm. Stay, prince! and know, I have a father here!— [*Stops* ABDALLA'S *hand.*

I were that parricide, of whom he spoke,
Did not my piety prevent your stroke.

D. Arcos to *Aben.* Depart, then, and thank Heaven you had a son.

Aben. I am not with these shows of duty won.

Ozm. [to his *Father.*] Heaven knows, I would that life, you seek, resign;
But, while Benzayda lives, it is not mine.
Will you yet pardon my unwilling crime?

Aben. By no entreaties, by no length of time,
Will I be won; but, with my latest breath,
I 'll curse thee here, and haunt thee after death.
[*Exit* ABEN. *with his party.*

Ozm. Can you be merciful to that degree,
[*Kneeling to* SELIN.
As to forgive my father's faults in me?
Can you forgive
The death of him I slew in my defence,
And from the malice separate the offence?
I can no longer be your enemy:
In short, now kill me, sir, or pardon me.
[*Offers him his sword.*
In this your silence my hard fate appears.

Selin. I 'll answer you when I can speak for tears.
But, till I can,
Imagine what must needs be brought to pass;
[*Embraces him.*
My heart 's not made of marble, nor of brass.
Did I for you a cruel death prepare,
And have you, have you made my life your care!

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There is a shame contracted by my faults,*
Which hinders me to speak my secret thoughts.
And I will tell you—when the shame's removed—
You are not better by my daughter loved.—
Benzayda be yours.—I can no more.

Ozm. Blessed be that breath which does my life restore! [*Embracing his knees.*

Benz. I hear my father now; these words confess
That name, and that indulgent tenderness.

Selin. Benzayda, I have been too much to blame;
But let your goodness expiate for my shame:
You Ozmyn's virtue did in chains adore,
And part of me was just to him before.—
My son!—

Ozm. My father!—

Selin. Since by you I live,
I, for your sake, your family forgive.
Let your hard father still my life pursue,
I hate not him, but for his hate to you;
Even that hard father yet may one day be
By kindness vanquished, as you vanquished me;
Or, if my death can quench to you his rage,
Heaven makes good use of my remaining age.

Abdal. I grieve your joys are mingled with my cares;
But all take interest in their own affairs;
And, therefore, I must ask how mine proceed.

Selin. They now are ripe, and but your presence need:
For Lyndaraxa, faithless as the wind,
Yet to your better fortunes will be kind;

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* [In estimating this rhyme it must be remembered that the "l" of "fault" dates only from the 16th century.—Ed.]

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For, hearing that the Christians own your cause,
From thence the assurance of a throne she draws.
And since Almanzor, whom she most did fear,
Is gone, she to no treaty will give ear;
But sent me her unkindness to excuse.

Abdal. You much surprise me with your pleasing news.

Selin. But, sir, she hourly does the assault expect,
And must be lost if you her aid neglect:
For Abdelmelech loudly does declare,
He 'll use the last extremities of war,
If she refuse the fortress to resign.

Abdal. The charge of hastening this relief be mine.

Selin. This while I undertook, whether beset,
Or else by chance, Abenamar I met;
Who seemed, in haste, returning to the town.

Abdal. My love must in my diligence be shown.—
And [*To* ARCOS] as my pledge of faith to Spain, this hour
I 'll put the fortress in your master's power.

Selin. An open way from hence to it there lies,
And we with ease may send in large supplies,
Free from the shot and sallies of the town.

D. Arcos. Permit me, sir, to share in your renown;
First to my king I will impart the news,
And then draw out what succours we shall use.
[*Exit Duke of* ARCOS.

Abdal. [*Aside.*] Grant that she loves me not, at least I see
She loves not others, if she loves not me.—
'Tis pleasure, when we reap the fruit of pain:
'Tis only pride, to be beloved again.

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How many are not loved, who think they are!
Yet all are willing to believe the fair;
And, though 'tis beauty's known and obvious cheat,
Yet man's self-love still favours the deceit.
[*Exit* ABDAL.

Selin. Farewell, my children! equally so dear,
That I myself am to myself less near:
While I repeat the dangers of the war,
Your mutual safety be each other's care.
Your father, Ozmyn, till the war be done,
As much as honour will permit, I 'll shun:
If by his sword I perish, let him know
It was because I would not be his foe.

Ozm. Goodness and virtue all your actions guide;
You only err in choosing of your side.
That party I, with honour, cannot take;
But can much less the care of you forsake:
I must not draw my sword against my prince,
But yet may hold a shield in your defence.
Benzayda, free from danger, here shall stay,
And for a father and a lover pray.

Benz. No, no! I gave not on those terms my heart,
That from my Ozmyn I should ever part:
That love I vowed, when you did death attend,
'Tis just that nothing but my death should end.
What merchant is it, who would stay behind,
His whole stock ventured to the waves and wind?
I 'll pray for both, but both shall be in sight;
And Heaven shall hear me pray, and see you fight.

Selin. No longer, Ozmyn, combat a design,
Where so much love and so much virtue join.

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Ozm. [*To* BENZ.] Then conquer, and your
conquest happy be,
Both to yourself, your father, and to me.—
With bended knees our freedom we 'll demand
Of Isabel and mighty Ferdinand:
Then while the paths of honour we pursue,
We 'll interest Heaven for us, in right of you.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Albayzyn.*

An alarm within; then Soldiers running over the stage. Enter ABDELMELECH, *victorious, with Soldiers.*

Abdelm. 'Tis won, 'tis won! and Lyndaraxa, now,
Who scorned to treat, shall to a conquest bow.
To every sword I free commission give;
Fall on, my friends, and let no rebel live.
Spare only Lyndaraxa; let her be
In triumph led, to grace my victory.
Since by her falsehood she betrayed my love,
Great as that falsehood my revenge shall prove.—

Enter LYNDARAXA, *as affrighted, attended by women.*

Go, take the enchantress, bring her to me bound!
Lyndar. Force needs not, where resistance is
not found:
I come, myself, to offer you my hands;
And, of my own accord, invite your bands.
I wished to be my Abdelmelech's slave;
I did but wish,—and easy fortune gave.
Abdelm. O, more than woman false!—but 'tis
in vain.—
Can you ere hope to be believed again?

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I 'll sooner trust the hyæna than your smile;
Or, than your tears, the weeping crocodile.
In war and love none should be twice deceived;
The fault is mine if you are now believed.
Lyndar. Be overwise, then, and too late repent;
Your crime will carry its own punishment.
I am well pleased not to be justified;
I owe no satisfaction to your pride.
It will be more advantage to my fame,
To have it said, I never owned a flame.
Abdelm. 'Tis true, my pride has satisfied itself:
I have at length escaped the deadly shelf.
The excuses you prepare will be in vain,
Till I am fool enough to love again.
Lyndar. Am I not loved?
Abdelm. I must with shame avow,
I loved you once, but do not love you now.
Lyndar. Have I for this betrayed Abdalla's trust?
You are to me, as I to him, unjust. [*Angrily.*
Abdelm. 'Tis like you have done much for love of me,
Who kept the fortress of my enemy.
Lyndar. 'Tis true, I took the fortress from his hand;
But, since, have kept it in my own command.
Abdelm. That act your foul ingratitude did show.
Lyndar. You are the ungrateful, since 'twas kept for you.
Abdelm. 'Twas kept indeed; but not by your intent:
For all your kindness I may thank the event.
Blush, Lyndaraxa, for so gross a cheat:
'Twas kept for me,—when you refused to treat!
[*Ironically.*

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Lyndar. Blind man! I knew the weakness of the place:
It was my plot to do your arms this grace.
Had not my care of your renown been great,
I loved enough to offer you to treat.
She, who is loved, must little lets create;
But you bold lovers are to force your fate.
This force you used, my maiden blush will save;
You seemed to take, what secretly I gave.
I knew we must be conquered; but I knew
What confidence I might repose in you.
I knew you were too grateful to expose
My friends and soldiers, to be used like foes.
Abdelm. Well, though I love you not, their lives shall be
Spared out of pity and humanity.—
Alferez [*To a Soldier*], go, and let the slaughter cease. [*Exit the Alferez.**
Lyndar. Then must I to your pity owe my peace?
Is that the tenderest term you can afford?
Time was, you would have used another word.
Abdelm. Then, for your beauty I your soldiers spare:
For, though I do not love you, you are fair.
Lyndar. That little beauty why did Heaven impart,
To please your eyes, but not to move your heart!
I 'll shroud this gorgon from all human view,
And own no beauty, since it charms not you!
Reverse your orders, and our sentence give;
My soldiers shall not from my beauty live.

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* [An alferez was an "ancient" or "ensign." The title is said to be still maintained for the lowest commissioned rank in the Spanish army and navy.—Ed.]

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Abdelm. Then, from your friendship they their
lives shall gain;
Though love be dead, yet friendship does remain.
Lyndar. That friendship, which from withered
love does shoot,
Like the faint herbage on a rock, wants root.
Love is a tender amity, refined:
Grafted on friendship it exalts the kind.
But when the graff no longer does remain,
The dull stock lives, but never bears again.
Abdelm. Then, that my friendship may not
doubtful prove,—
Fool that I am to tell you so!—I love.
You would extort this knowledge from my breast,
And tortured me so long that I confest.
Now I expect to suffer for my sin;
My monarchy must end, and yours begin.
Lyndar. Confess not love, but spare yourself
that shame,
And call your passion by some other name.
Call this assault, your malice, or your hate;
Love owns no acts so disproportionate.
Love never taught this insolence you show,
To treat your mistress like a conquered foe.
Is this the obedience which my heart should
move?
This usage looks more like a rape than love.
Abdelm. What proof of duty would you I
should give?
Lyndar. 'Tis grace enough to let my subjects
live!
Let your rude soldiers keep possession still;
Spoil, rifle, pillage,—anything but kill.
In short, sir, use your fortune as you please;
Secure my castle, and my person seize;
Let your true men my rebels hence remove:
I shall dream on, and think 'tis all your love!

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Abdelm. You know too well my weakness and your power:
Why did Heaven make a fool a conqueror!
She was my slave, 'till she by me was shown
How weak my force was, and how strong her own.
Now she has beat my power from every part,
Made her way open to my naked heart:
[*To a Soldier.*
Go, strictly charge my soldiers to retreat:
Those countermand who are not entered yet.
On peril of your lives leave all things free.
[*Exit Soldier.*
Now, madam, love Abdalla more than me.
I only ask, in duty you would bring
The keys of our Albayzyn to the king:
I 'll make your terms as gentle as you please.
[*Trumpets sound a charge within, and soldiers shout.*
What shouts, and what new sounds of war are these?

Lyndar. Fortune, I hope, has favoured my intent, [*Aside.*
Of gaining time, and welcome succours sent.

Enter the Alferez.

Alferez. All's lost, and you are fatally deceived:
The foe is entered, and the place relieved.
Scarce from the walls had I drawn off my men,
When, from their camp, the enemy rushed in,
And prince Abdalla entered first the gate.

Abdelm. I am betrayed, and find it now too late.
When your proud soul to flatteries did descend,
[*To her.*
I might have known it did some ill portend.
The wary seaman stormy weather fears,
When winds shift often, and no cause appears.

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You by my bounty live——
Your brothers, too, were pardoned for my sake,
And this return your gratitude does make.
Lyndar. My brothers best their own obligement know;
Without your charging me with what they owe.
But, since you think the obligement is so great,
I 'll bring a friend to satisfy my debt.
[*Looking behind.*
Abdelm. Thou shalt not triumph in thy base design;
Though not thy fort, thy person shall be mine.
[*He goes to take her: She runs and cries out help.*

Enter ABDALLA, *Duke of* ARCOS, *and Spaniards.* ABDELMELECH *retreats fighting, and is pursued by the adverse party off the stage. An alarm within.*

Enter again ABDALLA *and the Duke of* ARCOS, *with* LYNDARAXA.

D. Arcos. Bold Abdelmelech twice our Spaniards faced,
Though much outnumbered; and retreated last.
Abdal. Your beauty, as it moves no common fire, [*To* LYNDARAXA.
So it no common courage can inspire.
As he fought well, so had he prospered too,
If, madam, he, like me, had fought for you.
Lyndar. Fortune, at last, has chosen with my eyes;
And, where I would have given it, placed the prize.
You see, sir, with what hardship I have kept
This precious gage, which in my hands you left.
But 'twas the love of you which made me fight,
And gave me courage to maintain your right.

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Now, by experience, you my faith may find,
And are to thank me that I seemed unkind.
When your malicious fortune doomed your fall,
My care restrained you then from losing all;
Against your destiny I shut the gate,
And gathered up the shipwrecks of your fate;
I, like a friend, did even yourself withstand,
From throwing all upon a losing hand.

Abdal. My love makes all your acts unquestioned go,
And sets a sovereign stamp on all you do.
Your love I will believe with hoodwinked eyes;—
In faith, much merit in much blindness lies.
But now, to make you great as you are fair,
The Spaniards an imperial crown prepare.

Lyndar. That gift's more welcome, which with you I share.
Let us no time in fruitless courtship lose,
But sally out upon our frighted foes.
No ornaments of power so please my eyes,
As purple, which the blood of princes dyes.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Alhambra.*

BOABDELIN, ABENAMAR, ALMAHIDE, *and Guards, etc. The Queen wearing a scarf.*

Aben. My little journey has successful been;
The fierce Almanzor will obey the queen.
I found him, like Achilles on the shore,
Pensive, complaining much, but threatening more;
And, like that injured Greek, he heard our woes,
Which, while I told, a gloomy smile arose
From his bent brows: And still, the more he heard,
A more severe and sullen joy appeared.

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But, when he knew we to despair were driven,
Betwixt his teeth he muttered thanks to Heaven.
Boab. How I disdain this aid! which I must take,
Not for my own, but Almahide's sake.
Aben. But when he heard it was the queen who sent,
That her command repealed his banishment,
He took the summons with a greedy joy,
And asked me how she would his sword employ:
Then bid me say, her humblest slave would come
From her fair mouth with joy to take his doom.
Boab. Oh that I had not sent you! though it cost
My crown! though I, and it, and all were lost!
Aben. While I, to bring this news, came on before,
I met with Selin——
Boab. I can hear no more.

Enter HAMET.

Hamet. Almanzor is already at the gate,
And throngs of people on his entrance wait.
Boab. Thy news does all my faculties surprise;
He bears two basilisks in those fierce eyes;
And that tame dæmon, which should guard my throne,
Shrinks at a genius greater than his own.
[*Exit* BOAB. *with* ABEN. *and Guards.*

Enter ALMANZOR; *seeing* ALMAHIDE *approach him, he speaks.*

Almanz. So Venus moves, when to the Thunderer,
In smiles or tears, she would some suit prefer;
When with her cestus girt,

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And drawn by doves, she cuts the liquid skies,
And kindles gentle fires where'er she flies:
To every eye a goddess is confest,
By all the heavenly nation she is blest,
And each with secret joy admits her to his breast.—
Madam, your new commands I come to know,
If yet you can have anywhere I go.
[*To her bowing.*
If to the regions of the dead they be,
You take the speediest course to send by me.
Almah. Heaven has not destined you so soon to rest:
Heroes must live to succour the distrest.
Almanz. To serve such beauty all mankind should live;
And, in our service, our reward you give.
But stay me not in torture, to behold
And ne'er enjoy. As from another's gold
The miser hastens, in his own defence,
And shuns the sight of tempting excellence;
So, having seen you once so killing fair,
A second sight were but to move despair.
I take my eyes from what too much would please,
As men in fevers famish their disease.
Almah. No; you may find your cure an easier way,
If you are pleased to seek it,—in your stay.
All objects lose by too familiar view,
When that great charm is gone, of being new;
By often seeing me, you soon will find
Defects so many, in my face and mind,
That to be freed from love you need not doubt;
And, as you looked it in, you 'll look it out.
Almanz. I rather, like weak armies, should retreat,
And so prevent my more entire defeat.

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For your own sake in quiet let me go;
Press not too far on a despairing foe:
I may turn back, and armed against you move,
With all the furious train of hopeless love.
Almah. Your honour cannot to ill thoughts give way,
And mine can run no hazard by your stay.
Almanz. Do you then think I can with patience see
That sovereign good possessed, and not by me?
No; I all day shall languish at the sight,
And rave on what I do not see all night;
My quick imagination will present
The scenes and images of your content.
When to my envied rival you dispense
Joys too unruly and too fierce for sense.*
Almah. These are the day-dreams which wild fancy yields,
Empty as shadows are, that fly o'er fields.
Oh, whither would this boundless fancy move!
'Tis but the raging calenture of love.†
Like a distracted passenger you stand,
And see, in seas, imaginary land,
Cool groves, and flowery meads; and while you think
To walk, plunge in, and wonder that you sink.
Almanz. Love's calenture too well I understand;
But sure your beauty is no fairy-land!
Of your own form a judge you cannot be;
For, glow-worm-like, you shine, and do not see.

---

* [Couplet omitted later, and by Scott.—Ed.]

† [The calenture, or delirium of tropical seas, is sufficiently well known. But this, with Wordsworth's *Brothers* and Heine's *Seegespenst*, makes up perhaps its classic mentions in poetry.—Ed.]

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Almah. Can you think this, and would you go away?

Almanz. What recompence attends me if I stay?

Almah. You know I am from recompence debarred,
But I will grant you merit a reward;
Your flame 's too noble to deserve a cheat,
And I too plain to practise a deceit.
I no return of love can ever make,
But what I ask is for my husband's sake;
He, I confess, has been ungrateful too,
But he and I are ruined if you go:
Your virtue to the hardest proof I bring;—
Unbribed, preserve a mistress and a king.

Almanz. I 'll stop at nothing that appears so brave:
I 'll do 't, and now I no reward will have.
You 've given my honour such an ample field,
That I may die, but that shall never yield.
Spite of myself I 'll stay, fight, love, despair;
And I can do all this, because I dare.
Yet I may own one suit—
That scarf, which, since by you it has been borne,
Is blessed, like relics which by saints were worn.

Almah. Presents like this my virtue durst not make,
But that 'tis given you for my husband's sake.
[*Gives the scarf.*

Almanz. This scarf to honourable rags I 'll wear,
As conquering soldiers tattered ensigns bear;
But oh, how much my fortune I despise,
Which gives me conquest, while she love denies!
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Alhambra.*

Enter ALMAHIDE *and* ESPERANZA.

Esper. Affected modesty has much of pride;
That scarf he begged, you could not have denied;
Nor does it shock the virtue of a wife,
When given that man to whom you owe your life.
Almah. Heaven knows from all intent of ill 'twas free,
Yet it may feed my husband's jealousy;
And for that cause I wish it were not done.

To them BOABDELIN, *and walks apart.*

See, where he comes, all pensive and alone;
A gloomy fury has o'erspread his face:
'Tis so! and all my fears are come to pass.
Boab. Marriage, thou curse of love, and snare of life, [*Aside.*
That first debased a mistress to a wife!
Love, like a scene, at distance should appear,
But marriage views the gross-daubed landscape near.
Love's nauseous cure! thou cloyest whom thou shouldst please;
And, when thou cur'st, then thou art the disease.
When hearts are loose, thy chain our bodies ties;
Love couples friends, but marriage enemies.
If love like mine continues after thee,
'Tis soon made sour, and turned by jealousy;
No sign of love in jealous men remains,
But that which sick men have of life—their pains.

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Almah. Has my dear lord some new affliction had? [*Walking to him.*
Have I done anything that makes him sad?
Boab. [*sighing and going off.*] You! nothing:
You! But let me walk alone.
Almah. [*approaching him.*] I will not leave you till the cause be known:
My knowledge of the ill may bring relief.
Boab. Thank ye; you never fail to cure my grief!
Trouble me not, my grief concerns not you.
Almah. While I have life, I will your steps pursue.
Boab. I 'm out of humour now; you must not stay.
Almah. I fear it is that scarf I gave away.
Boab. No, 'tis not that; but speak of it no more:
Go hence! I am not what I was before.
Almah. Then I will make you so; give me your hand!
Can you this pressing and these tears withstand?
Boab. Oh Heaven, were she but mine, or mine alone! [*Sighing, and going off from her.*
Ah, why are not the hearts of women known!
False women to new joys unseen can move;
There are no prints left in the paths of love.
All goods besides by public marks are known;
But what we most desire to keep, has none.
Almah. Why will you in your breast your passion crowd, [*Approaching him.*
Like unborn thunder rolling in a cloud?
Torment not your poor heart, but set it free,
And rather let its fury break on me.
I am not married to a god; I know
Men must have passions, and can bear from you.
I fear the unlucky present I have made!
Boab. O power of guilt! how conscience can upbraid!

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It forces her not only to reveal,
But to repeat what she would most conceal!
Almah. Can such a toy, and given in public too——
Boab. False woman, you contrived it should be so.
That public gift in private was designed
The emblem of the love you meant to bind.
Hence from my sight, ungrateful as thou art!
And, when I can, I 'll banish thee my heart.
[*She weeps.*

To them ALMANZOR *wearing the Scarf. He sees her weep.*

Almanz. What precious drops are those,
Which silently each other's track pursue,
Bright as young diamonds in their infant dew?
Your lustre you should free from tears maintain,
Like Egypt, rich without the help of rain.
Now cursed be he who gave this cause of grief;
And double cursed, who does not give relief!
Almah. Our common fears, and public miseries,
Have drawn these tears from my afflicted eyes.
Almanz. Madam, I cannot easily believe
It is for any public cause you grieve.
On your fair face the marks of sorrow lie;
But I read fury in your husband's eye:
And, in that passion, I too plainly find
That you 're unhappy, and that he 's unkind.
Almah. Not new-made mothers greater love express
Than he, when with first looks their babes they bless;
Not Heaven is more to dying martyrs kind,
Nor guardian angels to their charge assigned.
Boab. O goodness counterfeited to the life!
O the well-acted virtue of a wife!

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Would you with this my just suspicions blind?
You 've given me great occasion to be kind!
The marks, too, of your spotless love appear;
Witness the badge of my dishonour there.
[*Pointing to* ALMANZOR'S *scarf.*
Almanz. Unworthy owner of a gem so rare!
Heavens! why must he possess, and I despair?
Why is this miser doomed to all this store;
He, who has all, and yet believes he 's poor?
Almah. [*to* ALMANZ.] You 're too much bold,
to blame a jealousy
So kind in him, and so desired by me.
The faith of wives would unrewarded prove,
Without those just observers of our love.
The greater care the higher passion shows;
We hold that dearest we most fear to lose.
Distrust in lovers is too warm a sun,
But yet 'tis night in love when that is gone;
And in those climes which most his scorching
know,
He makes the noblest fruits and metals grow.
Almanz. Yes; there are mines of treasure in
your breast,
Seen by that jealous sun, but not possest.
He, like a devil, among the blest above,
Can take no pleasure in your heaven of love.
Go, take her, and thy causeless fears remove;
[*To the King.*
Love her so well, that I with rage may die:
Dull husbands have no right to jealousy:
If that 's allowed, it must in lovers be.
Boab. The succour, which thou bring'st me,
makes thee bold:
But know, without thy aid, my crown I 'll
hold;
Or, if I cannot, I will fire the place,
Of a full city make a naked space.

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Hence, then, and from a rival set me free!
I 'll do, I 'll suffer anything but thee.
Almanz. I wonnot go; I 'll not be forced away:
I came not for thy sake, nor do I stay.
It was the queen who for my aid did send;
And 'tis I only can the queen defend:
I, for her sake, thy sceptre will maintain:
And thou, by me, in spite of thee, shalt reign.
Boab. Had I but hope I could defend this place
Three days, thou shouldst not live to my disgrace
So small a time;
Might I possess my Almahide alone,
I would live ages out ere they were gone.
I should not be of love or life bereft;
All should be spent before, and nothing left.
Almah. [*to* BOAB.] As for your sake I for Almanzor sent,
So, when you please, he goes to banishment.
You shall, at last, my loyalty approve:
I will refuse no trial of my love.
Boab. How can I think you love me, while I see
That trophy of a rival's victory?
I 'll tear it from his side.
Almanz. I 'll hold it fast
As life, and when life's gone, I 'll hold this last;
And if thou tak'st it after I am slain,
I 'll send my ghost to fetch it back again.
Almah. When I bestowed that scarf, I had not thought,
Or not considered it might be a fault;
But, since my lord 's displeased that I should make
So small a present, I command it back.
Without delay the unlucky gift restore;
Or, from this minute, never see me more.

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Almanz. The shock of such a curse I dare
not stand:
[*Pulling it off hastily, and presenting it to her.*
Thus I obey your absolute command.
[*She gives it to the King.*
Must he the spoils of scorn'd Almanzor wear?—
May Turnus' fate be thine, who dared to bear
The belt of murdered Pallas! from afar
Mayst thou be known, and be the mark of war!
Live, just to see it from thy shoulders torn
By common hands, and by some coward worn.
[*An alarm within.*

Enter ABDELMELECH, ZULEMA, HAMET, ABENAMAR; *their swords drawn.*

Abdelm. Is this a time for discord or for grief?
We perish, sir, without your quick relief.
I have been fooled, and am unfortunate;
The foes pursue their fortune and our fate.
Zul. The rebels with the Spaniards are agreed.
Boab. Take breath; my guards shall to the
fight succeed.
Aben. [*to* ALMANZOR.] Why stay you, sir? the conquering foe is near:
Give us their courage, and give them our fear.
Hamet. Take arms, or we must perish in your
sight.
Almanz. I care not: perish: for I will not
fight.
I wonnot lift an arm in his defence:
And yet I wonnot stir one foot from hence.
I to your king's defence his town resign;
This only spot, whereon I stand, is mine.—
Madam, be safe, and lay aside your fear,
[*To the Queen.*
You are as in a magic circle here.

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Boab. To our own valour our success we'll owe.
Haste, Hamet, with Abenamar to go;
You two draw up, with all the speed you may,
Our last reserves; and yet redeem the day.

[*Exeunt* HAMET *and* ABENAMAR *one way, the King the other, with* ABDELMELECH, *etc. Alarm within.*

Enter ABDELMELECH, *his sword drawn.*

Abdelm. Granada is no more! the unhappy king,
Venturing too far, ere we could succour bring,
Was by the duke of Arcos prisoner made,
And, past relief, is to the fort conveyed.

Almanz. Heaven, thou art just! go, now despise my aid.

Almah. Unkind Almanzor, how am I betrayed!
Betrayed by him in whom I trusted most!
But I will ne'er outlive what I have lost.
Is this your succour, this your boasted love?
I will accuse you to the saints above!
Almanzor vowed he would for honour fight,
And lets my husband perish in my sight.

[*Exeunt* ALMAHIDE *and* ESPERANZA.

Almanz. Oh, I have erred; but fury made me blind;
And, in her just reproach, my fault I find!
I promised even for him to fight, whom I—
But since he 's loved by her, he must not die.
Thus, happy fortune comes to me in vain,
When I myself must ruin it again.

To him ABENAMAR, HAMET, ABDELMELECH, ZULEMA, *Soldiers.*

Aben. The foe has entered the Vermillion towers;
And nothing but the Alhambra now is ours.

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Almanz. Even that's too much, except we may have more;
You lost it all to that last stake before.
Fate, now come back; thou canst not further get;
The bounds of thy libration * here are set.
Thou know'st this place,
And, like a clock wound up, strik'st here for me;
Now, Chance, assert thy own inconstancy,
And, Fortune, fight, that thou mayst Fortune be!—
They come: here, favoured by the narrow place,
[*A noise within.*
I can, with few, their gross battalion face.
By the dead wall, you, Abdelmelech, wind;
Then charge, and their retreat cut off behind.
[*Exeunt.*
[*An alarm within.*

Enter ALMANZOR *and his Party, with* ABDALLA *prisoner.*

Almanz. You were my friend: and to that name I owe [*To* ABDAL.
The just regard, which you refused to show.
Your liberty I frankly would restore,
But honour now forbids me to do more.
Yet, sir, your freedom in your choice shall be,
When you command to set your brother free.

Abdal. The exchange, which you propose, with joy I take;
An offer easier than my hopes could make.
Your benefits revenge my crimes to you,
For I my shame in that bright mirror view.

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* [This little-used word has various senses applicable here, as the swing of a pendulum, and (in a technical use) the changes of the moon's surface.—ED.]

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Almanz. No more; you give me thanks you do not owe:
I have been faulty and repent me now.
But, though our penitence a virtue be,
Mean souls alone repent in misery;
The brave own faults when good success is given,
For then they come on equal terms to heaven.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Albayzyn.*

Enter OZMYN *and* BENZAYDA.

Benz. I see there's somewhat which you fear to tell;
Speak quickly, Ozmyn, is my father well?
Why cross you thus your arms, and shake your head?
Kill me at once, and tell me he is dead.
Ozm. I know not more than you; but fear not less;
Twice sinking, twice I drew him from the press:
But the victorious foe pursued so fast,
That flying throngs divided us at last.
As seamen parting in a general wrack,
When first the loosening planks begin to crack,
Each catches one, and straight are far disjoined,
Some borne by tides, and others by the wind;
So, in this ruin, from each other rent,
With heaved-up hands we mutual farewells sent:
Methought his eyes, when just I lost his view,
Were looking blessings to be sent to you.
Benz. Blind queen of Chance, to lovers too severe,
Thou rulest mankind, but art a tyrant there!
Thy widest empire's in a lover's breast:
Like open seas, we seldom are at rest.

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Upon thy coasts our wealth is daily cast;
And thou, like pirates, mak'st no peace to last.

To them LYNDARAXA, *Duke of* ARCOS, *and Guards.*

D. Arcos. We were surprised when least we did suspect,
And justly suffered by our own neglect.
Lyndar. No; none but I have reason to complain!
So near a kingdom, yet 'tis lost again!
O, how unequally in me were joined
A creeping fortune with a soaring mind!
O lottery of fate! where still the wise
Draw blanks of fortune, and the fools the prize!
These cross, ill-shuffled lots from heaven are sent,
Yet dull Religion teaches us content;
But when we ask it where that blessing dwells,
It points to pedant colleges, and cells;
There shows it rude, and in a homely dress,
And that proud want mistakes for happiness.
[*A trumpet within.*

Enter ZULEMA.

Brother! what strange adventure brought you here?
Zul. The news I bring will yet more strange appear.
The little care you of my life did show,
Has of a brother justly made a foe;
And Abdelmelech, who that life did save,
As justly has deserved that life he gave.
Lyndar. Your business cools, while tediously it stays
On the low theme of Abdelmelech's praise.

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Zul. This I present from Prince Abdalla's hands. [*Delivers a letter, which she reads.*

Lyndar. He has proposed (to free him from his bands)
That, with his brother, an exchange be made.

D. Arcos. It proves the same design which we had laid.
Before the castle let a bar be set;
And when the captives on each side are met,
With equal numbers chosen for their guard,
Just at the time the passage is unbarred,
Let both at once advance, at once be free.

Lyndar. The exchange I will myself in person see.

Benz. I fear to ask, yet would from doubt be freed,—
Is Selin captive, sir, or is he dead?

Zul. I grieve to tell you what you needs must know,—
He is a prisoner to his greatest foe;
Kept with strong guards in the Alhambra tower;
Without the reach even of Almanzor's power.

Ozm. With grief and shame I am at once opprest.

Zul. You will be more when I relate the rest.
To you I from Abenamar am sent, [*To* OZMYN.
And you alone can Selin's death prevent.
Give up yourself a prisoner in his stead;
Or, ere to-morrow's dawn, believe him dead.

Benz. Ere that appear, I shall expire with grief.

Zul. Your action swift, your counsel must be brief.

Lyndar. While for Abdalla's freedom we prepare,
You in each other's breast unload your care.

[*Exeunt all but* OZMYN *and* BENZAYDA.

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Benz. My wishes contradictions must imply;
You must not go; and yet he must not die.
Your reason may, perhaps, the extremes unite;
But there 's a mist of fate before my sight.
Ozm. The two extremes too distant are, to close;
And human wit can no mid way propose.
My duty therefore shows the nearest way,
To free your father, and my own obey.
Benz. Your father, whom, since yours, I grieve to blame,
Has lost, or quite forgot, a parent's name;
And, when at once possessed of him and you,
Instead of freeing one, will murder two.
Ozm. Fear not my life; but suffer me to go:
What cannot only sons with parents do!
'Tis not my death my father does pursue;
He only would withdraw my love from you.
Benz. Now, Ozmyn, now your want of love I see;
For would you go, and hazard losing me?
Ozm. I rather would ten thousand lives forsake;
Nor can you e'er believe the doubt you make.
This night I with a chosen band will go,
And, by surprise, will free him from the foe.
Benz. What foe! ah whither would your virtue fall!
It is your father whom the foe you call.
Darkness and rage will no distinction make,
And yours may perish for my father's sake.
Ozm. Thus, when my weaker virtue goes astray,
Yours pulls it back, and guides me in the way:
I 'll send him word, my being shall depend
On Selin's life, and with his death shall end.

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Benz. 'Tis that, indeed, would glut your father's rage:
Revenge on Ozmyn's youth, and Selin's age.
Ozm. Whate'er I plot, like Sisyphus, in vain
I heave a stone, that tumbles down again.
Benz. This glorious work is then reserved for me:
He is my father, and I 'll set him free.
These chains my father for my sake does wear:
I made the fault; and I the pains will bear.
Ozm. Yes; you no doubt have merited these pains;
Those hands, those tender limbs, were made for chains!
Did I not love you, yet it were too base
To let a lady suffer in my place.
Those proofs of virtue you before did show,
I did admire; but I must envy now.
Your vast ambition leaves no fame for me,
But grasps at universal monarchy.
Benz. Yes, Ozmyn, I shall still this palm pursue;
I will not yield my glory even to you.
I 'll break those bonds in which my father 's tied,
Or, if I cannot break them, I 'll divide.
What, though my limbs a woman's weakness show,
I have a soul as masculine as you;
And when these limbs want strength my chains to wear,
My mind shall teach my body how to bear.
[*Exit* BENZ.
Ozm. What I resolve, I must not let her know;
But honour has decreed she must not go.
What she resolves, I must prevent with care;
She shall not in my fame or danger share.

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I 'll give strict order to the guards which wait,
That, when she comes, she shall not pass the gate.
Fortune, at last, has run me out of breath;
I have no refuge but the arms of death:
To that dark sanctuary I will go;
She cannot reach me when I lie so low. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*The Albayzyn.*

Enter, on the one side, ALMANZOR, ABDALLA, ABDELMELECH, ZULEMA, HAMET. *On the other side, the Duke of* ARCOS, BOABDELIN, LYNDARAXA, *and their Party. After which the bars are opened; and at the same time* BOABDELIN *and* ABDALLA *pass by each other, each to his Party; when* ABDALLA *is passed on the other side, the Duke of* ARCOS *approaches the bars, and calls to* ALMANZOR.

D. Arcos. The hatred of the brave with battles ends,
And foes, who fought for honour, then are friends.
I love thee, brave Almanzor, and am proud
To have one hour when love may be allowed.
This hand, in sign of that esteem, I plight;
We shall have angry hours enough to fight.
[*Giving his hand.*

Almanz. The man who dares, like you, in fields appear,
And meet my sword, shall be my mistress here.
If I am proud, 'tis only to my foes;
Rough but to such who virtue would oppose.
If I some fierceness from a father drew,
A mother's milk gives me some softness too.

D. Arcos. Since first you took, and after set me free,
(Whether a sense of gratitude it be,

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Or some more secret motion of my mind,
For which I want a name that 's more than kind)
I shall be glad, by whate'er means I can,
To get the friendship of so brave a man;
And would your unavailing valour call,
From aiding those whom Heaven has doomed to fall.
We owe you that respect,
Which to the gods of foes besieged was shown,
To call you out before we take your town.

Almanz. Those whom we love, we should esteem them too,
And not debauch that virtue which we woo.
Yet, though you give my honour just offence,
I 'll take your kindness in the better sense;
And, since you for my safety seem to fear,
I, to return your bribe, should wish you here.
But, since I love you more than you do me,
In all events preserve your honour free;
For that 's your own, though not your destiny.

D. Arcos. Were you obliged in honour by a trust,
I should not think my own proposals just;
But since you fight for an unthankful king,
What loss of fame can change of parties bring?

Almanz. It will, and may with justice too be thought,
That some advantage in that change I sought.
And though I twice have changed for wrongs received,
That it was done for profit none believed.
The king's ingratitude I knew before;
So that can be no cause of changing more.
If now I stand, when no reward can be,
'Twill show the fault before was not in me.

D. Arcos. Yet there is one reward to valour due,
And such it is as may be sought by you;

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That beauteous queen, whom you can never gain,
While you secure her husband's life and reign.
Almanz. Then be it so; let me have no return
[*Here* LYNDARAXA *comes near, and hears them.*
From him but hatred, and from her but scorn.
There is this comfort in a noble fate,
That I deserve to be more fortunate.
You have my last resolve; and now, farewell:
My boding heart some mischief does foretell;
But what it is, heaven will not let me know.
I 'm sad to death, that I must be your foe.
D. Arcos. Heaven, when we meet, if fatal it must be
To one, spare him, and cast the lot on me.
[*They retire.*
Lyndar. Ah, what a noble conquest were this heart!
I am resolved I 'll try my utmost art:
In gaining him, I gain that fortune too,
Which he has wedded, and which I but woo.
I 'll try each secret passage to his mind,
And love's soft bands about his heart-strings wind.
Not his vowed constancy shall 'scape my snare;
While he without resistance does prepare,
I 'll melt into him ere his love 's aware.
[*She makes a gesture of invitation to* ALMANZOR, *who returns again.*
Lyndar. You see, sir, to how strange a remedy
A persecuted maid is forced to fly:
Who, much distressed, yet scarce has confidence
To make your noble pity her defence.
Almanz. Beauty, like yours, can no protection need;
Or, if it sues, is certain to succeed.
To whate'er service you ordain my hand,
Name your request, and call it your command.

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Lyndar. You cannot, sir, but know that my ill fate
Has made me loved with all the effects of hate:
One lover would, by force, my person gain;
Which one, as guilty, would by force detain.
Rash Abdelmelech's love I cannot prize,
And fond Abdalla's passion I despise.
As you are brave, so you are prudent too;
Advise a wretched woman what to do.
Almanz. Have courage, fair one, put your trust in me;
You shall, at least, from those you hate, be free.
Resign your castle to the king's command,
And leave your love concernments in my hand.
Lyndar. The king, like them, is fierce, and faithless too;
How can I trust him who has injured you?
Keep for yourself, (and you can grant no less)
What you alone are worthy to possess.
Enter, brave sir; for, when you speak the word,
These gates will open of their own accord;
The genius of the place its lord will meet,
And bend its tow'ry forehead to your feet.
That little citadel, which now you see,
Shall, then, the head of conquered nations be;
And every turret, from your coming, rise
The mother of some great metropolis.
Almanz. 'Tis pity, words, which none but gods should hear,
Should lose their sweetness in a soldier's ear:
I am not that Almanzor whom you praise;
But your fair mouth can fair ideas raise:—
I am a wretch, to whom it is denied
To accept, with honour, what I wish with pride;
And, since I fight not for myself, must bring
The fruits of all my conquests to the king.

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Lyndar. Say rather to the queen, to whose fair name
I know you vow the trophies of your fame.
I hope she is as kind as she is fair;
Kinder than inexperienced virgins are
To their first loves; (though she has loved before,
And that first innocence is now no more:)
But, in revenge, she gives you all her heart,
(For you are much too brave to take a part.)
Though, blinded by a crown, she did not see
Almanzor greater than a king could be,
I hope her love repairs her ill-made choice:
Almanzor cannot be deluded twice.
Almanz. No, not deluded; for none count their gains,
Who, like Almanzor, frankly give their pains.
Lyndar. Almanzor, do not cheat yourself, nor me;
Your love is not refined to that degree:
For, since you have desires, and those not blest,
Your love 's uneasy, and at little rest.
Almanz. 'Tis true, my own unhappiness I see;
But who, alas, can my physician be?
Love, like a lazy ague, I endure,
Which fears the water, and abhors the cure.
Lyndar. 'Tis a consumption, which your life does waste,
Still flattering you with hope, till help be past;
But, since of cure from her you now despair,
You, like consumptive men, should change your air:
Love somewhere else; 'tis a hard remedy,
But yet you owe yourself so much, to try.
Almanz. My love 's now grown so much a part of me,
That life would, in the cure, endangered be:

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At least, it like a limb cut off would show;
And better die than like a cripple go.
Lyndar. You must be brought like madmen to their cure,
And darkness first, and next new bonds endure:
Do you dark absence to yourself ordain,
And I, in charity, will find the chain.
Almanz. Love is that madness which all lovers have;
But yet 'tis sweet and pleasing so to rave:
'Tis an enchantment, where the reason 's bound;
But Paradise is in the enchanted ground;
A palace, void of envy, cares and strife,
Where gentle hours delude so much of life.
To take those charms away, and set me free,
Is but to send me into misery;
And prudence, of whose cure so much you boast,
Restores those pains which that sweet folly lost.
Lyndar. I would not, like philosophers, remove,
But show you a more pleasing shape of love.
You a sad, sullen, froward love did see;
I 'll show him kind, and full of gaiety.
In short, Almanzor, it shall be my care
To show you love; for you but saw despair.
Almanz. I, in the shape of love, despair did see;
You, in his shape, would show inconstancy.
Lyndar. There 's no such thing as constancy you call;
Faith ties not hearts; 'tis inclination all.
Some wit deformed, or beauty much decayed,
First constancy in love a virtue made.
From friendship they that landmark did remove,
And falsely placed it on the bounds of love.
Let the effects of change be only tried;
Court me, in jest, and call me Almahide:

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But this is only counsel I impart,
For I, perhaps, should not receive your heart.
Almanz. Fair though you are
As summer mornings, and your eyes more bright
Than stars that twinkle in a winter's night;
Though you have eloquence to warm and move
Cold age and praying hermits, into love;
Though Almahide with scorn rewards my care,—
Yet, than to change, 'tis nobler to despair.
My love's my soul; and that from fate is free;
'Tis that unchanged and deathless part of me.
Lyndar. The fate of constancy your love pursue!
Still to be faithful to what's false to you.
[*Turns from him, and goes off angrily.*
Almanz. Ye gods, why are not hearts first paired above,
But some still interfere in others' love?
Ere each for each by certain marks are known,
You mould them up in haste, and drop them down;
And, while we seek what carelessly you sort,
You sit in state, and make our pains your sport.
[*Exeunt on both sides.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter ABENAMAR, *and Servants.*

Aben. Haste and conduct the prisoner to my sight.
[*Exit Servant, and immediately enters with* SELIN *bound.*
Aben. Did you, according to my orders, write?
[*To* SELIN.
And have you summoned Ozmyn to appear?
Selin. I am not yet so much a slave to fear,

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Nor has your son deserved so ill of me,
That by his death or bonds I would be free.
Aben. Against thy life thou dost the sentence give;
Behold how short a time thou hast to live.
Selin. Make haste, and draw the curtain while you may;
You but shut out the twilight of my day.
Beneath the burden of my age I bend:
You kindly ease me ere my journey's end.
[*To them a Servant with* OZMYN; OZMYN *kneels.*
Aben. to *Selin.* It is enough, my promise makes you free;
Resign your bonds, and take your liberty.
Ozm. Sir, you are just, and welcome are these bands;
'Tis all the inheritance a son demands.
Selin. Your goodness, O my Ozmyn, is too great;
I am not weary of my fetters yet:
Already, when you move me to resign,
I feel them heavier on your feet than mine.

Enter another Soldier or Servant.

Sold. A youth attends you in the outer room,
Who seems in haste, and does from Ozmyn come.
Aben. Conduct him in.—
Ozm. Sent from Benzayda, I fear, to me.

To them BENZAYDA, *in the habit of a man.*

Benz. My Ozmyn here!
Ozm. Benzayda! 'tis she!—
Go, youth, I have no business for thee here;
Go to the Albayzyn, and attend me there.
I 'll not be long away; I pray thee go,
By all our love and friendship——
Benz. Ozmyn, no:

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I did not take on me this bold disguise,
For ends so low, to cheat your watchmen's eyes.
When I attempted this, it was to do
An action, to be envied even by you;
But you, alas, have been too diligent,
And what I purposed fatally prevent!
Those chains, which for my father I would bear,
I take with less content to find you here;
Except your father will that mercy show,
That I may wear them both for him and you.
Aben. I thank thee, fortune! thou hast, in one hour,
Put all I could have asked thee in my power.
My own lost wealth thou giv'st not only back,
But driv'st upon my coast my pirate's wrack.
Selin. With Ozmyn's kindness I was grieved before,
But yours, Benzayda, has undone me more.
Aben. to a *Soldier*. Go fetch new fetters, and the daughter bind.
Ozm. Be just at least, sir, though you are not kind:
Benzayda is not as a prisoner brought,
But comes to suffer for another's fault.
Aben. Then, Ozmyn, mark, that justice which I do,
I, as severely, will exact from you:
The father is not wholly dead in me;
Or you may yet revive it, if it be.
Like tapers new blown out, the fumes remain,
To catch the light, and bring it back again.
Benzayda gave you life, and set you free;
For that, I will restore her liberty.
Ozm. Sir, on my knees I thank you.
Aben. Ozmyn, hold;
One part of what I purpose is untold:

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Consider, then, it on your part remains,
When I have broke, not to resume your chains.
Like an indulgent father, I have paid
All debts, which you, my prodigal, have made.
Now you are clear, break off your fond design,
Renounce Benzayda, and be wholly mine.

Ozm. Are these the terms? Is this the liberty?
Ah, sir, how can you so inhuman be?
My duty to my life I will prefer;
But life and duty must give place to her.

Aben. Consider what you say, for, with one breath,
You disobey my will, and give her death.

Ozm. Ah, cruel father, what do you propose!
Must I then kill Benzayda, or must lose?
I can do neither; in this wretched state,
The least that I can suffer is your hate;
And yet that 's worse that death: Even while I sue,
And choose your hatred, I could die for you.
Break quickly, heart, or let my blood be spilt
By my own hand, to save a father's guilt.

Benz. Hear me, my lord, and take this wretched life,
To free you from the fear of Ozmyn's wife.
I beg but what with ease may granted be,
To spare your son, and kill your enemy;
Or, if my death 's a grace too great to give,
Let me, my lord, without my Ozmyn live.
Far from your sight and Ozmyn's let me go,
And take from him a care, from you a foe.

Ozm. How, my Benzayda! can you thus resign
That love, which you have vowed so firmly mine?
Can you leave me for life and liberty?

Benz. What I have done will show that I dare die;

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But I 'll twice suffer death, and go away,
Rather than make you wretched by my stay:
By this my father's freedom will be won;
And to your father I restore a son.
Selin. Cease, cease, my children, your unhappy strife,
Selin will not be ransomed by your life.
Barbarian, thy old foe defies thy rage; [*To* ABEN.
Turn, from their youth, thy malice to my age.
Benz. Forbear, dear father! for your Ozmyn's sake,
Do not such words to Ozmyn's father speak.
Ozm. Alas, 'tis counterfeited rage; he strives
But to divert the danger from our lives:
For I can witness, sir, and you might see,
How in your person he considered me.
He still declined the combat where you were;
And you well know it was not out of fear.
Benz. Alas, my lord, where can your vengeance fall?
Your justice will not let it reach us all.
Selin and Ozmyn both would sufferers be;
And punishment 's a favour done to me.
If we are foes, since you have power to kill,
'Tis generous in you not to have the will;
But, are we foes? Look round, my lord, and see;
Point out that face which is your enemy.
Would you your hand in Selin's blood embrue?
Kill him unarmed, who, armed, shunned killing you?
Am I your foe? Since you detest my line,
That hated name of Zegry I resign:
For you, Benzayda will herself disclaim;
Call me your daughter, and forget my name.
Selin. This virtue would even savages subdue;
And shall it want the power to vanquish you?

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Ozm. It has, it has; I read it in his eyes;
'Tis now not anger, 'tis but shame denies;
A shame of error, that great spirits find,
Which keeps down virtue struggling in the mind.
Aben. Yes, I am vanquished! The fierce conflict 's past,
And shame itself is now o'ercome at last.
'Twas long before my stubborn mind was won;
But, melting once, I on the sudden run;
Nor can I hold my headlong kindness more,
Than I could curb my cruel rage before.
[*Runs to* BENZ., *and embraces her.*
Benzayda, 'twas your virtue vanquished me;
That could alone surmount my cruelty.
[*Runs to* SELIN, *and unbinds him.*
Forgive me, Selin, my neglect of you;
But men, just waking, scarce know what they do.
Ozm. O father!
Benz. Father!
Aben. Dare I own that name!
Speak, speak it often, to remove my shame.
[*They all embrace him.*
O Selin, O my children, let me go!
I have more kindness than I yet can show.
For my recovery I must shun your sight;
Eyes used to darkness cannot bear the light.
[*He runs in, they following him.*

SCENE II.—*The Albayzyn.*

Enter ALMANZOR, ABDELMELECH, *Soldiers.*

Almanz. 'Tis war again, and I am glad 'tis so;
Success shall now by force and courage go.
Treaties are but the combat of the brain,
Where still the stronger lose, and weaker gain.

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Abdelm. On this assault, brave sir, which we prepare,
Depends the sum and fortune of the war.
Encamped without the fort the Spaniard lies,
And may, in spite of us, send in supplies.
Consider yet, ere we attack the place,
What 'tis to storm it in an army's face.

Almanz. The minds of heroes their own measures are,
They stand exempted from the rules of war.
One loose, one sally of the hero's soul,
Does all the military art control:
While timorous wit goes round, or fords the shore,
He shoots the gulf, and is already o'er;
And, when the enthusiastic fit is spent,
Looks back amazed at what he underwent.

[*Exeunt.*

[*An alarum within.*

Re-enter ALMANZOR *and* ABDELMELECH, *with their Soldiers.*

Abdelm. They fly, they fly; take breath and charge again.

Almanz. Make good your entrance, and bring up more men.
I feared, brave friend, my aid had been too late.

Abdelm. You drew us from the jaws of certain fate.
At my approach,
The gate was open, and the drawbridge down;
But, when they saw I stood, and came not on,
They charged with fury on my little band,
Who, much o'erpowered, could scarce the shock withstand.

Almanz. Ere night we shall the whole Albayzyn gain.
But see, the Spaniards march along the plain

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To its relief; you, Abdelmelech, go,
And force the rest, while I repulse the foe.
[*Exit* ALMANZOR.

Enter ABDALLA, *and some few Soldiers, who seem fearful.*

Abdal. Turn, cowards, turn! there is no hope in flight;
You yet may live, if you but dare to fight.
Come, you brave few, who only fear to fly,
We 're not enough to conquer, but to die.
Abdelm. No, prince, that mean advantage I refuse;
'Tis in your power a nobler fate to choose.
Since we are rivals, honour does command
We should not die but by each other's hand.
Retire; and, if it prove my destiny [*To his men.*
To fall, I charge you let the prince go free.
[*The Soldiers depart on both sides.*
Abdal. O, Abdelmelech, that I knew some way
This debt of honour, which I owe, to pay!
But fate has left this only means for me,
To die, and leave you Lyndaraxa free.
Abdelm. He, who is vanquished and is slain, is blest:
The wretched conqueror can ne'er have rest;
But is reserved a harder fate to prove,
Bound in the fetters of dissembled love.
Abdal. Now thou art base, and I deserve her more;
Without complaint I will to death adore.
Dar'st thou see faults, and yet dost love pretend?
I will even Lyndaraxa's crimes defend.

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Abdelm. Maintain her cause, then, better than thy own,—
Than thy ill-got, and worse-defended throne.
[*They fight*, ABDALLA *falls.*
Abdelm. Now ask your life.
Abdal. 'Tis gone; that busy thing,
The soul, is packing up, and just on wing,
Like parting swallows, when they seek the spring:
Like them, at its appointed time, it goes,
And flies to countries more unknown than those.

Enter LYNDARAXA *hastily, sees them, and is going out again.* ABDELMELECH *stops her.*

Abdelm. No, you shall stay, and see a sacrifice,
Not offered by my sword, but by your eyes.
From those he first ambitious poison drew,
And swelled to empire for the love of you.
Accursed fair!
Thy comet-blaze portends a prince's fate;
And suffering subjects groan beneath thy weight.
Abdal. Cease, rival, cease!
I would have forced you, but it wonnot be;
I beg you now, upbraid her not for me.
You, fairest, to my memory be kind!
[*To* LYNDAR.
Lovers like me your sex will seldom find.
When I usurped a crown for love of you,
I then did more, than, dying, now I do.
I 'm still the same as when my love begun;
And, could I now this fate foresee or shun,
Would yet do all I have already done. [*Dies.*
[*She puts her handkerchief to her eyes.*
Abdelm. Weep on, weep on, for it becomes you now;
These tears you to that love may well allow.

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His unrepenting soul, if it could move
Upward in crimes, flew spotted with your love;
And brought contagion to the blessed above.
Lyndar. He's gone, and peace go with a constant mind!
His love deserved I should have been more kind;
But then your love and greater worth I knew:
I was unjust to him, but just to you.
Abdelm. I was his enemy, and rival too,
Yet I some tears to his misfortune owe:
You owe him more; weep then, and join with me:
So much is due even to humanity.
Lyndar. Weep for this wretch, whose memory I hate!
Whose folly made us both unfortunate!
Weep for this fool, who did my laughter move!
This whining, tedious, heavy lump of love!
Abdelm. Had fortune favoured him, and frowned on me,
I then had been that heavy fool, not he:
Just this had been my funeral elegy.
Thy arts and falsehood I before did know,
But this last baseness was concealed till now;
And 'twas no more than needful to be known;
I could be cured by such an act alone.
My love, half blasted, yet in time would shoot;
But this last tempest rends it to the root.
Lyndar. These little piques, which now your anger move,
Will vanish, and are only signs of love.
You 've been too fierce; and, at some other time,
I should not with such ease forgive your crime:
But, in a day of public joy like this,
I pardon, and forget whate'er 's amiss.

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Abdelm. These arts have oft prevailed, but must no more:
The spell is ended, and the enchantment o'er.
You have at last destroyed, with much ado,
That love, which none could have destroyed, but you.
My love was blind to your deluding art;
But blind men feel, when stabbed so near the heart.
Lyndar. I must confess there was some pity due;
But I concealed it out of love to you.
Abdelm. No, Lyndaraxa; 'tis at last too late;
Our loves have mingled with too much of fate.
I would, but cannot now, myself deceive:
O that you still could cheat, and I believe!
Lyndar. Do not so light a quarrel long pursue:
You grieve your rival was less loved than you.
'Tis hard, when men of kindness must complain!
Abdelm. I 'm now awake, and cannot dream again.
Lyndar. Yet hear——
Abdelm. No more; nothing my heart can bend:
That queen, you scorned, you shall this night attend.
Your life the king has pardoned for my sake;
But on your pride I some revenge must take.
See now the effects of what your arts designed!
Thank your inconstant and ambitious mind.
'Tis just that she, who to no love is true,
Should be forsaken, and contemned, like you.
Lyndar. All arts of injured women I will try:
First I will be revenged; and then I 'll die.
But, like some falling tower,

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Whose seeming firmness does the sight beguile,
So hold I up my nodding head a while,
Till they come under; and reserve my fall,
That with my ruins I may reach them all.

Abdelm. Conduct her hence.

[*Exit* LYNDAR. *guarded.*

Enter a Soldier.

Sold. Almanzor is victorious without fight;
The foes retreated when he came in sight.
Under the walls, this night, his men are drawn,
And mean to seek the Spaniard with the dawn.

Abdelm. The sun 's declined:
Command the watch be set without delay,
And in the fort let bold Benducar stay.—

[*Exit Soldier.*

I 'll haste to court, where solitude I 'll fly,
And herd, like wounded deer, in company.
But oh, how hard a passion to remove,
When I must shun myself to 'scape from love!

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A Gallery in the Alhambra.*

ZULEMA, HAMET.

Hamet. I thought your passion for the queen was dead,
Or that your love had, with your hopes, been fled.

Zul. 'Twas like a fire within a furnace pent;
I smothered it, and kept it long from vent;
But, fed with looks, and blown with sighs so fast,
It broke a passage through my lips at last.

Hamet. Where found you confidence your suit to move?
Our broken fortunes are not fit to love.

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Well; you declared your love:—What followed then?

Zul. She looked as judges do on guilty men,
When big with fate they triumph in their dooms,
And smile before the deadly sentence comes.
Silent I stood, as I were thunder-struck;
Condemned and executed with a look.

Hamet. You must, with haste, some remedy prepare:
Now you are in, you must break through the snare.

Zul. She said, she would my folly yet conceal;
But vowed my next attempt she would reveal.

Hamet. 'Tis dark; and in this lonely gallery,
Remote from noise, and shunning every eye,
One hour each evening she in private mourns,
And prays, and to the circle then returns.
Now, if you dare, attempt her passing by.*

Zul. These lighted tapers show the time is nigh.
Perhaps my courtship will not be in vain:
At least, few women will of force complain.

At the other end of the Gallery, enter ALMANZOR *and* ESPERANZA.

Hamet. Almanzor, and with him
The favourite slave of the sultana queen.

Zul. Ere they approach, let us retire unseen,
And watch our time when they return again:
Then force shall give, if favour does deny;
And, that once done, we 'll to the Spaniards fly.
[*Exeunt* ZUL. *and* HAMET.

Almanz. Now stand; the apartment of the queen is near;
And, from this place, your voice will reach her ear. [ESPERANZA *goes out.*

* [Omitted in Scott.—ED.]

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SONG, IN TWO PARTS.

I.

He. *How unhappy a lover am I,*
While I sigh for my Phyllis in vain;
All my hopes of delight
Are another man's right,
Who is happy, while I am in pain!

II.

She. *Since her honour allows no relief,*
But to pity the pains which you bear,
'Tis the best of your fate,
In a hopeless estate,
To give o'er, and betimes to despair.

III.

He. *I have tried the false med'cine in vain;*
For I wish what I hope not to win:
From without, my desire
Has no food to its fire;
But it burns and consumes me within.

IV.

She. *Yet, at least, 'tis a pleasure to know*
That you are not unhappy alone:
For the nymph you adore
Is as wretched, and more;
And counts all your sufferings her own.

V.

He. *O ye gods, let me suffer for both;*
At the feet of my Phyllis I'll lie:
I'll resign up my breath,
And take pleasure in death,
To be pitied by her when I die.

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VI.

She. *What her honour denied you in life,*
In her death she will give to your love.
Such a flame as is true
After fate will renew,
For the souls to meet closer above.

Enter ESPERANZA *again, after the Song.*

Almanz. Accept this diamond, till I can present
Something more worthy my acknowledgment.
And now farewell: I will attend, alone,
Her coming forth; and make my sufferings known. [*Exit* ESPERANZA.
A hollow wind comes whistling through that door.
And a cold shivering seizes me all o'er;
My teeth, too, chatter with a sudden fright:—
These are the raptures of too fierce delight,
The combat of the tyrants, hope and fear;
Which hearts, for want of field-room, cannot bear.
I grow impatient;—this, or that 's the room:—
I 'll meet her;—now, methinks I hear her come.
[*He goes to the door; the Ghost of his Mother meets him: He starts back: The Ghost stands in the door.*
Well mayst thou make thy boast whate'er thou art!
Thou art the first e'er made Almanzor start.
My legs
Shall bear me to thee in their own despite:
I 'll rush into the covert of thy night,
And pull thee backward, by thy shroud, to light;
Or else I 'll squeeze thee, like a bladder, there,
And make thee groan thyself away to air.
[*The Ghost retires.*
So, thou art gone! Thou canst no conquest boast:
I thought what was the courage of a ghost.—

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The grudging of my ague yet remains;
My blood, like icicles, hangs in my veins,
And does not drop;—Be master of that door,
We two will not disturb each other more.
I erred a little, but extremes may join;
That door was hell's, but this is heaven's and mine.
[*Goes to the other door, and is met again by the Ghost.*
Again! by Heaven, I do conjure thee, speak!
What art thou, spirit? and what dost thou seek?
[*The Ghost comes on softly after the conjuration; and* ALMANZOR *retires to the middle of the stage.*
Ghost. I am the ghost of her who gave thee birth;
The airy shadow of her mouldering earth.
Love of thy father me through seas did guide;
On seas I bore thee, and on seas I died.
I died; and for my winding-sheet a wave
I had, and all the ocean for my grave.
But, when my soul to bliss did upward move,
I wandered round the crystal walls above;
But found the eternal fence so steeply high,
That, when I mounted to the middle sky,
I flagged, and fluttered down, and could not fly.
Then, from the battlements of the heavenly tower,
A watchman angel bid me wait this hour;
And told me, I had yet a task assigned,
To warn that little pledge I left behind;
And to divert him, ere it were too late,
From crimes unknown, and errors of his fate.
Almanz. Speak, holy shade; thou parent-form, speak on! [*Bowing.*
Instruct thy mortal-elemented son;
For here I wander, to myself unknown.
But O, thou better part of heavenly air,
Teach me, kind spirit, since I 'm still thy care,

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My parents' names:
If I have yet a father, let me know
To whose old age my humble youth must bow,
And pay its duty, if he mortal be,
Or adoration, if a mind, like thee.
Ghost. Then, what I may, I 'll tell.—
From ancient blood thy father's lineage springs,
Thy mother's thou deriv'st from stems of kings.
A Christian born, and born again that day,
When sacred water washed thy sins away.
Yet, bred in errors, thou dost misemploy
That strength Heaven gave thee, and its flock destroy.
Almanz. By reason, man a godhead may discern,
But how he would be worshipped cannot learn.
Ghost. Heaven does not now thy ignorance reprove,
But warns thee from known crimes of lawless love.
That crime thou knowest, and, knowing, dost not shun,
Shall an unknown and greater crime pull on:
But if, thus warned, thou leav'st this cursed place,
Then shalt thou know the author of thy race.
Once more I 'll see thee; then my charge is done.
Far hence, upon the Mountains of the Moon,
Is my abode; where heaven and nature smile,
And strew with flowers the secret bed of Nile.
Blessed souls are there refined, and made more bright,
And, in the shades of heaven, prepared for light.
[*Exit Ghost.*
Almanz. O Heaven, how dark a riddle 's thy decree,
Which bounds our wills, yet seems to leave them free!
Since thy foreknowledge cannot be in vain,
Our choice must be what thou didst first ordain.

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Thus, like a captive in an isle confined,
Man walks at large, a prisoner of the mind:
Wills all his crimes, while Heaven the indictment draws,
And, pleading guilty, justifies the laws.
Let fate be fate; the lover and the brave
Are ranked, at least, above the vulgar slave.
Love makes me willing to my death to run;
And courage scorns the death it cannot shun.

Enter ALMAHIDE *with a taper.*

Almah. My light will sure discover those who talk.—
Who dares to interrupt my private walk?
Almanz. He, who dares love, and for that love must die,
And, knowing this, dares yet love on, am I.
Almah. That love which you can hope, and I can pay,
May be received and given in open day:
My praise and my esteem you had before;
And you have bound yourself to ask no more.
Almanz. Yes, I have bound myself; but will you take
The forfeit of that bond, which force did make?
Almah. You know you are from recompence debarred;
But purest love can live without reward.
Almanz. Pure love had need be to itself a feast;
For, like pure elements, 'twill nourish least.
Almah. It therefore yields the only pure content;
For it, like angels, needs no nourishment.
To eat and drink can no perfection be;
All appetite implies necessity.
Almanz. 'Twere well if I could like a spirit live;
But, do not angels food to mortals give?

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What if some demon should my death foreshow,
Or bid me change, and to the Christians go;
Will you not think I merit some reward,
When I my love above my life regard?
Almah. In such a case your change must be allowed:
I would myself dispense with what you vowed.
Almanz. Were I to die that hour when I possess,
This minute shall begin my happiness.
Almah. The thoughts of death your passion would remove;
Death is a cold encouragement to love.
Almanz. No; from my joys I to my death would run,
And think the business of my life well done:
But I should walk a discontented ghost,
If flesh and blood were to no purpose lost.
Almah. You love me not, Almanzor; if you did,
You would not ask what honour must forbid.
Almanz. And what is honour, but a love well hid?
Almah. Yes, 'tis the conscience of an act well done,
Which gives us power our own desires to shun;
The strong and secret curb of headlong will;
The self-reward of good, and shame of ill.
Almanz. These, madam, are the maxims of the day,
When honour's present, and when love's away.
The duty of poor honour were too hard,
In arms all day, at night to mount the guard.
Let him, in pity, now to rest retire;
Let these soft hours be watched by warm desire.
Almah. Guards, who all day on painful duty keep,
In dangers are not privileged to sleep.

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Almanz. And with what dangers are you threatened here?
Am I, alas! a foe for you to fear?
See, madam, at your feet this enemy; [*Kneels.*
Without your pity and your love I die.
Almah. Rise, rise, and do not empty hopes pursue;
Yet think that I deny myself, not you.
Almanz. A happiness so high I cannot bear:
My love 's too fierce, and you too killing fair.
I grow enraged to see such excellence!—
If words, so much disordered, give offence,
My love 's too full of zeal to think of sense.
Be you like me; dull reason hence remove,
And tedious forms, and give a loose to love.
Love eagerly; let us be gods to-night;
And do not, with half yielding, dash delight.
Almah. Thou strong seducer, opportunity!
Of womankind, half are undone by thee!
Though I resolve I will not be misled,
I wish I had not heard what you have said!
I cannot be so wicked to comply;
And, yet, am most unhappy to deny!
Away!
Almanz. I will not move me from this place:
I can take no denial from that face!
Almah. If I could yield,—but think not that I will,—
You and myself I in revenge should kill;
For I should hate us both, when it were done,
And would not to the shame of life be won.
Almanz. Live but to-night, and trust to-morrow's mind:
Ere that can come, there 's a whole life behind.
Methink, already crowned with joys I lie,
Speechless and breathless, in an ecstasy!

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Not absent in one thought: I am all there:
Still close, yet wishing still to be more near.
Almah. Deny your own desires; for it will be
Too little now to be denied by me.
Will he, who does all great, all noble seem,
Be lost and forfeit to his own esteem?
Will he, who may with heroes claim a place,
Belie that fame, and to himself be base?
Think how august and godlike you did look,
When my defence, unbribed, you undertook;
But, when an act so brave you disavow,
How little, and how mercenary now!
Almanz. Are, then, my services no higher prized?
And can I fall so low to be despised?
Almah. Yes; for whatever may be bought, is low;
And you yourself, who sell yourself, are so.
Remember the great act you did this day:
How did your love to virtue then give way!
When you gave freedom to my captive lord,—
That rival who possessed what you adored,—
Of such a deed what price can there be made?
Think well; is that an action to be paid?
It was a miracle of virtue shown;
And wonders are with wonder paid alone.
And would you all that secret joy of mind,
Which great souls only in great actions find,
All that, for one tumultuous minute lose?
Almanz. I would that minute before ages choose.
Praise is the pay of heaven for doing good;
But love 's the best return for flesh and blood.
Almah. You 've moved my heart so much, I can deny
No more; but know, Almanzor, I can die.

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Thus far my virtue yields; if I have shown
More love than what I ought, let this atone.
[*Going to stab herself.*
Almanz. Hold, hold!
Such fatal proofs of love you shall not give:
Deny me; hate me; both are just,—but live!
Your virtue I will ne'er disturb again;
Nor dare to ask, for fear I should obtain.
Almah. 'Tis generous to have conquered your desire;
You mount above your wish, and lose it higher.
There's pride in virtue, and a kindly heat;
Not feverish, like your love, but full as great.
Farewell; and may our loves hereafter be
But image-like, to heighten piety.*
Almanz. 'Tis time I should be gone.—
Alas! I am but half converted yet;
All I resolve, I with one look forget;
And, like a lion, whom no arts can tame,
Shall tear even those, who would my rage reclaim.
[*Exeunt severally.*

[ZULEMA *and* HAMET *watch* ALMANZOR; *and when he is gone, go in after the Queen.*

Enter ABDELMELECH *and* LYNDARAXA.

Lyndar. It is enough, you've brought me to this place:
Here stop and urge no further my disgrace.
Kill me; in death your mercy will be seen,
But make me not a captive to the queen.

* [The exact sense of this line is not very evident, though in the vague it is perceivable enough. The reference seems to be to the excuse for image-worship,—that the images are not intended to be directly adored, but merely to fix and stimulate the devotion of the worshipper. But the parallel is not easy to work out in detail.—ED.]

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Abdelm. 'Tis therefore I this punishment provide:
This only can revenge me on your pride.
Prepare to suffer what you shun in vain;
And know, you now are to obey, not reign.

Enter ALMAHIDE *shrieking; her hair loose; she runs over the stage.*

Almah. Help, help, O heaven, some help!

Enter ZULEMA *and* HAMET.

Zul. Make haste before,
And intercept her passage to the door.
Abdelm. Villains, what act are you attempting here!
Almah. I thank thee, heaven! some succour does appear.
[*As* ABDELMELECH *is going to help the Queen,* LYNDARAXA *pulls out his sword, and holds it.*
Abdelm. With what ill fate my good design is curst!
Zul. We have no time to think; despatch him first.
Abdelm. O for a sword!
[*They make at* ABDELMELECH; *he goes off at one door, while the Queen escapes at the other.*
Zul. Ruined!
Hamet. Undone!
Lyndar. And which is worst of all,
He is escaped.
Zul. I hear them loudly call.
Lyndar. Your fear will lose you; call as loud as they:
I have not time to teach you what to say.

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The court will in a moment all be here;
But second what I say, and do not fear.
Call help; run that way; leave the rest to me.
[ZUL. *and* HAMET *retire, and within cry,*—Help!

Enter, at several doors, the King, ABENAMAR, SELIN, OZMYN, ALMANZOR, *with Guards attending* BOABDELIN.

Boab. What can the cause of all this tumult be?
And what the meaning of that naked sword?
Lyndar. I'll tell, when fear will so much breath afford.—
The queen and Abdelmelech—'Twill not out—
Even I, who saw it, of the truth yet doubt,
It seems so strange.
Almanz. Did she not name the queen?
Haste; speak.
Lyndar. How dare I speak what I have seen?—
With Hamet, and with Zulema I went,
To pay both theirs, and my acknowledgment
To Almahide, and by her mouth implore
Your clemency, our fortunes to restore.
We chose this hour, which we believed most free,
When she retired from noise and company.
The antechamber past, we gently knocked,
Unheard it seems, but found the lodgings locked.
In duteous silence while we waited there,
We first a noise, and then long whispers hear;
Yet thought it was the queen at prayers alone,
Till she distinctly said,—If this were known,
My love, what shame, what danger would ensue!
Yet I,—and sighed,—could venture more for you!
Boab. O heaven, what do I hear!

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Almanz. Let her go on.
Lyndar. And how,—then murmured in a bigger tone
Another voice,—and how should it be known?
This hour is from your court attendants free;
The king suspects Almanzor, but not me.
Zul. I find her drift; Hamet, be confident;
[*At the door.*
Second her words, and fear not the event.

ZULEMA *and* HAMET *enter. The King embraces them.*

Boab. Welcome, my only friends;—behold in me,
O kings, behold the effects of clemency!
See here the gratitude of pardoned foes!
That life, I gave them, they for me expose!
Hamet. Though Abdelmelech was our friend before,
When duty called us, he was so no more.
Almanz. Damn your delay!—you torturers, proceed!
I will not hear one word but Almahide.
Boab. When you, within, the traitor's voice did hear,
What did you then?
Zul. I durst not trust my ear;
But, peeping through the key-hole I espied
The queen, and Abdelmelech by her side;
She on the couch, he on her bosom lay;
Her hand about his neck his head did stay,
And from his forehead wiped the drops away.
Boab. Go on, go on, my friends, to clear my doubt;
I hope I shall have life to hear you out.
Zul. What had been, sir, you may suspect too well;
What followed, modesty forbids to tell:

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Seeing what we had thought beyond belief,
Our hearts so swelled with anger and with grief,
That, by plain force, we strove the door to break.
He, fearful, and with guilt, or love, grown weak,
Just as we entered, 'scaped the other way;
Nor did the amazed queen behind him stay.
Lyndar. His sword, in so much haste, he could not mind;
But left this witness of his crime behind.
Boab. O proud, ungrateful, faithless woman-kind!
How changed, and what a monster am I made!
My love, my honour, ruined and betrayed!
Almanz. Your love and honour! mine are ruined worse:—
Furies and hell!—What right have you to curse?
Dull husband as you are,
What can your love, or what your honour, be?
I am her lover, and she 's false to me.
Boab. Go; when the authors of my shame are found,
Let them be taken instantly and bound:
They shall be punished as our laws require:
'Tis just, that flames should be condemned to fire.
This, with the dawn of morning shall be done.
Aben. You haste too much her execution.
Her condemnation ought to be deferred;
With justice, none can be condemned unheard.
Boab. A formal process tedious is, and long;
Besides, the evidence is full and strong.
Lyndar. The law demands two witnesses; and she
Is cast, for which heaven knows I grieve, by three.
Ozm. Hold, sir! since you so far insist on law,
We can from thence one just advantage draw:
That law, which dooms adultresses to die,
Gives champions, too, to slandered chastity.

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Almanz. And how dare you, who from my bounty live,
Intrench upon my love's prerogative?
Your courage in your own concernments try;
Brothers are things remote, while I am by.
Ozm. I knew not you thus far her cause would own,
And must not suffer you to fight alone;
Let two to two in equal combat join;
You vindicate her person, I her line.
Lyndar. Of all mankind, Almanzor has least right
In her defence, who wrong'd his love, to fight.
Almanz. 'Tis false: she is not ill, nor can she be;
She must be chaste, because she 's loved by me.
Zul. Dare you, what sense and reason prove, deny?
Almanz. When she 's in question, sense and reason lie.
Zul. For truth, and for my injured sovereign,
What I have said, I will to death maintain.
Ozm. So foul a falsehood, whoe'er justifies,
Is basely born, and, like a villain, lies.
In witness of that truth, be this my gage.
[*Takes a ring from his finger.*
Hamet. I take it; and despise a traitor's rage.
Boab. The combat 's yours.—A guard the lists surround;
Then raise a scaffold in the encompassed ground,
And, by it, piles of wood; in whose just fire,
Her champions slain, the adultress shall expire.
Aben. We ask no favour, but what arms will yield.
Boab. Choose, then, two equal judges of the field:
Next morning shall decide the doubtful strife,
Condemn the unchaste, or quit the virtuous wife.

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Almanz. But I am both ways cursed:
For Almahide must die, if I am slain:
Or for my rival I the conquest gain. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

ALMANZOR *solus.*

I have outfaced myself; and justified,
What I knew false, to all the world beside.
She was as faithless as her sex could be;
And, now I am alone, she 's so to me.
She 's fallen! and, now, where shall we virtue find?
She was the last that stood of womankind.
Could she so holily my flames remove,
And fall that hour to Abdelmelech's love?
Yet her protection I must undertake;
Not now for love, but for my honour's sake,
That moved me first, and must oblige me still:
My cause is good, however hers be ill.
I 'll leave her, when she 's freed; and let it be
Her punishment, she could be false to me.

To him ABDELMELECH, *guarded.*

Abdelm. Heaven is not heaven, nor are there deities;
There is some new rebellion in the skies.
All that was good and holy is dethroned,
And lust and rapine are for justice owned.
Almanz. 'Tis true; what justice in that heaven can be,
Which thus affronts me with the sight of thee?
Why must I be from just revenge debarred?
Chains are thy arms, and prisons are thy guard:
The death, thou diest, may to a husband be
A satisfaction; but 'tis none to me.
My love would justice to itself afford;
But now thou creep'st to death below my sword.

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Abdelm. This threatening would show better were I free.

Almanz. No; wert thou freed, I would not threaten thee;
This arm should then—but now it is too late!
I could redeem thee to a nobler fate.
As some huge rock,
Rent from its quarry, does the waves divide,
So I
Would souse upon thy guards, and dash them wide:
Then, to my rage left naked and alone,
Thy too much freedom thou shouldst soon bemoan;
Dared* like a lark, that, on the open plain
Pursued and cuffed, seeks shelter now in vain;
So on the ground wouldst thou expecting lie,
Not daring to afford me victory.
But yet thy fate 's not ripe; it is decreed,
Before thou diest, that Almahide be freed.
My honour first her danger must remove,
And then revenge on thee my injured love.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

The SCENE *changes to the Vivarambla, and appears filled with Spectators; a Scaffold hung with black.*

Enter the QUEEN *guarded, with* ESPERANZA.

Almah. See how the gazing people crowd the place,
All gaping to be filled with my disgrace.

[*A shout within.*

* [To "dare" larks is to scare them with bright objects, or with a hawk, so that they flutter about helplessly.—ED.]

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That shout, like the hoarse peals of vultures, rings,
When over fighting fields they beat their wings.—
Let never woman trust in innocence,
Or think her chastity its own defence.
Mine has betrayed me to this public shame,
And virtue, which I served, is but a name.

Esper. Leave then that shadow, and for succour fly
To Him we serve, the Christian's Deity.
Virtue 's no god, nor has she power divine:
But He protects it, who did first enjoin.
Trust then in Him; and from his grace implore
Faith to believe, what rightly we adore.

Almah. Thou Power unknown, if I have erred, forgive!
My infancy was taught what I believe.
But if the Christians truly worship thee,
Let me thy Godhead in thy succour see:
So shall thy justice in my safety shine,
And all my days, which thou shalt add, be thine!

Enter the KING, ABENAMAR, LYNDARAXA, BENZAYDA: *then* ABDELMELECH *guarded; and after him* SELIN *and* ALABEZ, *as Judges of the Field.*

Boab. You, judges of the field, first take your place.—
The accusers and accused bring face to face.
Set guards, and let the lists be opened wide;
And may just heaven assist the juster side!

Almah. What! not one tender look, one passing word?
Farewell, my much unkind, but still loved lord!
Your throne was for my humble fate too high,
And therefore heaven thinks fit that I should die.
My story be forgot, when I am dead,
Lest it should fright some other from your bed;

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And, to forget me, may you soon adore
Some happier maid,—yet none could love you more.
But may you never think me innocent,
Lest it should cause you trouble to repent.
Boab. 'Tis pity so much beauty should not live; [*Aside.*
Yet I too much am injured, to forgive.
[*Goes to his seat.*

Trumpets: Then enter two Moors, bearing two naked swords before the accusers ZULEMA *and* HAMET, *who follow them. The Judges seat themselves; the* QUEEN *and* ABDELMELECH *are led to the Scaffold.*

Alabez. Say for what end you thus in arms appear;
What are your names, and what demand you here?
Zul. The Zegrys' ancient race our lineage claims;
And Zulema and Hamet are our names.
Like loyal subjects in these lists we stand,
And justice in our king's behalf demand.
Hamet. For whom, in witness of what both have seen,
Bound by our duty, we appeach the queen
And Abdelmelech, of adultery.
Zul. Which, like true knights, we will maintain, or die.
Alabez. Swear on the Alcoran your cause is right,
And Mahomet so prosper you in fight.
[*They touch their foreheads with the Alcoran, and bow.*

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Trumpets on the other side of the Stage; two Moors, as before, with bare swords before ALMANZOR *and* OZMYN.

Selin. Say for what end you thus in arms appear;
What are your names, and what demand you here?
Almanz. Ozmyn is his, Almanzor is my name;
We come as champions of the queen's fair fame.
Ozm. To prove these Zegrys, like false traitors, lie;
Which, like true knights, we will maintain, or die.
Selin. [*to* ALMAH.] Madam, do you for champions takes these two,
By their success to live or die?
Almah. I do.
Selin. Swear on the Alcoran your cause is right;
And Mahomet so prosper you in fight.
[*They kiss the Alcoran.*
[OZMYN *and* BENZAYDA *embrace, and take leave in dumb show; while* LYNDARAXA *speaks to her Brother.*
Lyndar. If you o'ercome, let neither of them live,
But use with care the advantages I give:
One of their swords in fight shall useless be;
The bearer of it is suborned by me.
[*She and* BENZAYDA *retire.*
Alabez. Now, principals and seconds, all advance,
And each of you assist his fellow's chance.
Selin. The wind and sun we equally divide,
So let the event of arms the truth decide.
The chances of the fight, and every wound,
The trumpets, on the victor's part, resound.
[*The trumpets sound;* ALMANZOR *and* ZULEMA *meet and fight;* OZMYN *and*

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HAMET. *After some passes, the sword of* OZMYN *breaks; he retires, defending himself, and is wounded; the Zegrys' Trumpets sound their advantage.* ALMANZOR, *in the meantime, drives* ZULEMA *to the farther end of the Stage, till, hearing the Trumpets of the adverse Party, he looks back, and sees* OZMYN'S *misfortune; he makes at* ZULEMA *just as* OZMYN *falls, in retiring, and* HAMET *is thrusting at him.*

Hamet. [*to* OZMYN, *thrusting.*] Our difference now shall soon determined be.

Almanz. Hold, traitor, and defend thyself from me.

[HAMET *leaves* OZMYN *(who cannot rise), and both he and* ZULEMA *fall on* ALMANZOR, *and press him; he retires, and* HAMET, *advancing first, is run through the body, and falls. The Queen's Trumpets sound.* ALMANZOR *pursues* ZULEMA.

Lyndar. I must make haste some remedy to find:—

Treason, Almanzor, treason! look behind.

[ALMANZOR *looks behind him to see who calls, and* ZULEMA *takes the advantage, and wounds him; the Zegrys' Trumpets sound;* ALMANZOR *turns upon* ZULEMA, *and wounds him; he falls. The Queen's Trumpets sound.*

Almanz. Now triumph in thy sister's treachery.

[*Stabbing him.*

Zul. Hold, hold! I have enough to make me die,

But, that I may in peace resign my breath,
I must confess my crime before my death.

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Mine is the guilt; the queen is innocent;
I loved her, and, to compass my intent,
Used force, which Abdelmelech did prevent.
The lie my sister forged; but, O! my fate
Comes on too soon, and I repent too late.
Fair queen, forgive; and let my penitence
Expiate some part of—— [*Dies.*

Almah. Even thy whole offence!

Almanz. [*to the Judges.*] If aught remains in the sultana's cause,
I here am ready to fulfil the laws.

Selin. The law is fully satisfied, and we
Pronounce the queen and Abdelmelech free.

Abdelm. Heaven, thou art just!

[*The Judges rise from their seats, and go before* ALMANZOR *to the Queen's Scaffold; he unbinds the Queen and* ABDELMELECH; *they all go off, the People shouting, and the Trumpets sounding the while.*

Boab. Before we pay our thanks, or show our joy,
Let us our needful charity employ.
Some skilful surgeon speedily be found,
To apply fit remedies to Ozmyn's wound.

Benz. [*running to* OZM.] That be my charge: my linen I will tear;
Wash it with tears, and bind it with my hair.

Ozm. With how much pleasure I my pains endure,
And bless the wound which causes such a cure!

[*Exit* OZM. *led by* BENZ. *and* ABEN.

Boab. Some from the place of combat bear the slain.—
Next Lyndaraxa's death I should ordain:
But let her, who this mischief did contrive,
For ever banished from Granada live.

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Lyndar. Thou shouldst have punished more,
or not at all:
By her thou hast not ruined, thou shalt fall.
The Zegrys shall revenge their branded line,
Betray their gate, and with the Christians join.
[*Aside.*

[*Exit* LYNDARAXA *with* ALABEZ; *the bodies of her Brothers are borne after her.*

ALMANZOR, ALMAHIDE, *and* ESPERANZA, *re-enter to the King.*

Almah. The thanks thus paid, which first to
heaven were due,
My next, Almanzor, let me pay to you:
Somewhat there is of more concernment too,
Which 'tis not fit you should in public know,
First let your wounds be dressed with speedy
care,
And then you shall the important secret share.

Almanz. Whene'er you speak,
Were my wounds mortal, they should still bleed
on;
And I would listen till my life were gone:
My soul should even for your last accent stay,
And then shout out, and with such speed obey,
It should not bait at heaven to stop its way.
[*Exit* ALMANZ.

Boab. 'Tis true, Almanzor did her honour
save,
But yet what private business can they have?
Such freedom virtue will not sure allow;
I cannot clear my heart, but must my brow.
[*Aside.*

[*He approaches* ALMAHIDE.
Welcome, again, my virtuous, loyal wife;
Welcome to love, to honour, and to life!
[*Goes to salute her, she starts back.*

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You seem
As if you from a loathed embrace did go!
Almah. Then briefly will I speak, since you must know
What to the world my future acts will show:
But hear me first, and then my reasons weigh.
'Tis known, how duty led me to obey
My father's choice; and how I since did live,
You, sir, can best your testimony give.
How to your aid I have Almanzor brought,
When by rebellious crowds your life was sought;
Then, how I bore your causeless jealousy,
(For I must speak) and after set you free,
When you were prisoner in the chance of war:
These, sure, are proofs of love.
Boab. I grant they are.
Almah. And could you then, O cruelly unkind!
So ill reward such tenderness of mind?
Could you, denying what our laws afford
The meanest subject, on a traitor's word,
Unheard, condemn, and suffer me to go
To death, and yet no common pity show!
Boab. Love filled my heart even to the brim before;
And then, with too much jealousy, boiled o'er.
Almah. Be't love or jealousy, 'tis such a crime,
That I 'm forewarned to trust a second time.
Know, then, my prayers to heaven shall never cease,
To crown your arms in war, your wars with peace;
But from this day I will not know your bed:
Though Almahide still lives, your wife is dead;
And with her dies a love so pure and true,
It could be killed by nothing but by you.
[*Exit* ALMAH.

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Boab. Yes; you will spend your life in prayers for me,
And yet this hour my hated rival see.
She might a husband's jealousy forgive;
But she will only for Almanzor live.
It is resolved; I will myself provide
That vengeance, which my useless laws denied;
And, by Almanzor's death, at once remove
The rival of my empire, and my love.
[*Exit* BOAB.

Enter ALMAHIDE, *led by* ALMANZOR, *and followed by* ESPERANZA; *she speaks, entering.*

Almah. How much, Almanzor, to your aid I owe,
Unable to repay, I blush to know;
Yet, forced by need, ere I can clear that score,
I, like ill debtors, come to borrow more.
Almanz. Your new commands I on my knees attend:
I was created for no other end.
Born to be yours, I do by nature serve,
And, like the labouring beast, no thanks deserve.
Almah. Yet first your virtue to your succour call,
For in this hard command you 'll need it all.
Almanz. I stand prepared; and whatsoe'er it be,
Nothing is hard to him, who loves like me.
Almah. Then know, I from your love must yet implore
One proof:—that you would never see me more.
Almanz. I must confess, [*Starting back.*
For this last stroke I did no guard provide;
I could suspect no foe was near that side.
From winds and thickening clouds we thunder fear,
None dread it from that quarter which is clear;

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And I would fain believe, 'tis but your art
To show
You knew where deepest you could wound my heart.
Almah. So much respect is to your passion due,
That sure I could not practise arts on you.
But that you may not doubt what I have said,
This hour I have renounced my husband's bed:
Judge, then, how much my fame would injured be,
If, leaving him, I should a lover see.
Almanz. If his unkindness have deserved that curse,
Must I, for loving well, be punished worse?
Almah. Neither your love nor merits I compare,
But my unspotted name must be my care.
Almanz. I have this day established its renown.
Almah. Would you so soon, what you have raised, throw down?
Almanz. But, madam, is not yours a greater guilt,
To ruin him, who has that fabric built?
Almah. No lover should his mistress' prayers withstand,
Yet you contemn my absolute command.
Almanz. 'Tis not contempt,
When your command is issued out too late:
'Tis past my power, and all beyond is fate.
I scarce could leave you, when to exile sent,
Much less when now recalled from banishment;
For if that heat your glances cast were strong,
Your eyes, like glasses, fire, when held so long.
Almah. Then, since you needs will all my weakness know,
I love you; and so well, that you must go.

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I am so much obliged, and have withal
A heart so boundless and so prodigal,
I dare not trust myself, or you, to stay,
But, like frank gamesters, must forswear the play.
Almanz. Fate, thou art kind to strike so hard a blow:
I am quite stunned, and past all feeling now.
Yet—can you tell me you have power and will
To save my life, and at that instant kill?
Almah. This, had you stayed, you never must have known;
But, now you go, I may with honour own.
Almanz. But, madam, I am forced to disobey:
In your defence my honour bids me stay.
I promised to secure your life and throne,
And, heaven be thanked, that work is yet undone.
Almah. I here make void that promise which you made,
For now I have no further need of aid.
That vow, which to my plighted lord was given,
I must not break, but may transfer to heaven:
I will with vestals live:
There needs no guard at a religious door;
Few will disturb the praying and the poor.
Almanz. Let me but near that happy temple stay,
And through the grates peep on you once a day;
To famished hope I would no banquet give:
I cannot starve, and wish but just to live.
Thus, as a drowning man
Sinks often, and does still more faintly rise,
With his last hold catching whate'er he spies;
So, fallen from those proud hopes I had before,
Your aid I for a dying wretch implore.
Almah. I cannot your hard destiny withstand,

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BOABDELIN, *and Guards above.*

But slip, like bending rushes, from your hand.
Sink all at once, since you must sink at last.
Almanz. Can you that last relief of sight remove,
And thrust me out the utmost line of love!
Then, since my hopes of happiness are gone,
Denied all favours, I will seize this one.
[*Catches her hand, and kisses it.*
Boab. My just revenge no longer I 'll forbear:
I 've seen too much; I need not stay to hear.
[*Descends.*
Almanz. As a small shower
To the parched earth does some refreshment give,
So, in the strength of this, one day I 'll live:
A day,—a year,——an age,—for ever, now;
[*Betwixt each word he kisses her hand by force; she struggling.*
I feel from every touch a new soul flow.
[*She snatches her hand away.*
My hoped eternity of joy is past!
'Twas insupportable, and could not last.
Were heaven not made of less, or duller joy,
'Twould break each minute, and itself destroy.

Enter King and Guards, below.

Boab. This, this, is he, for whom thou didst deny
To share my bed:—Let them together die.
Almah. Hear me, my lord.
Boab. Your flattering arts are vain:
Make haste and execute what I ordain.
[*To the Guards.*
Almanz. Cut piecemeal in this cause,
From every wound I should new vigour take,
And every limb should new Almanzors make.
[*He puts himself before the Queen; the Guards attack him, with the King.*

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Enter ABDELMELECH.

Abdelm. What angry god, to exercise his spite,
[*To the King.*
Has arm'd your left hand, to cut off your right?
[*The King turns, the fight ceases.*
The foes are entered at the Elvira gate:
False Lyndaraxa has the town betrayed,
And all the Zegrys give the Spaniards aid.

Boab. O mischief, not suspected nor foreseen!

Abdelm. Already they have gained the Zacatin,
And thence the Vivarambla place possest,
While our faint soldiers scarce defend the rest.
The Duke of Arcos does one squadron head,
The next by Ferdinand himself is led.

Almah. Now, brave Almanzor, be a god again;
Above our crimes and your own passions reign.
My lord has been by jealousy misled,
To think I was not faithful to his bed.
I can forgive him, though my death he sought,
For too much love can never be a fault. —
Protect him, then; and what to his defence
You give not, give to clear my innocence.

Almanz. Listen, sweet heaven, and all ye blessed above,
Take rules of virtue from a mortal love!
You 've raised my soul; and if it mount more high,
'Tis as the wren did on the eagle fly.
Yes, I once more will my revenge neglect,
And whom you can forgive, I can protect.

Boab. How hard a fate is mine, still doomed to shame!
I make occasions for my rival's fame!
[*Exeunt. An alarm within.*

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Enter FERDINAND, ISABELLA, *Don* ALONZO D'AGUILAR; *Spaniards and Ladies.*

K. Ferd. Already more than half the town is gained,
But there is yet a doubtful fight maintained.
Alonz. The fierce young king the entered* does attack,
And the more fierce Almanzor drives them back.
K. Ferd. The valiant Moors like raging lions fight;
Each youth encouraged by his lady's sight.
Q. Isabel. I will advance with such a shining train,
That Moorish beauties shall oppose in vain.
Into the press of clashing swords we 'll go,
And, where the darts fly thickest, seek the foe.
K. Ferd. May heaven, which has inspired this generous thought,
Avert those dangers you have boldly sought!
Call up more troops; the women, to our shame,
Will ravish from the men their part of fame.
[*Exeunt* ISABELLA *and Ladies.*

Enter ALABEZ, *and kisses the King's hand.*

Alabez. Fair Lyndaraxa, and the Zegry line,
Have led their forces with your troops to join:
The adverse part, which obstinately fought,
Are broke, and Abdelmelech prisoner brought.
K. Ferd. Fair Lyndaraxa, and her friends, shall find
The effects of an obliged and grateful mind.
Alabez. But, marching by the Vivarambla place,
The combat carried a more doubtful face:

* [*i.e.* "those who have entered."—ED.]

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In that vast square the Moors and Spaniards met,
Where the fierce conflict is continued yet;
But with advantage on the adverse side,
Whom fierce Almanzor does to conquest guide.
K. Ferd. With my Castilian foot I 'll meet his rage;
[*Is going out: Shouts within are heard,*—
Victoria! Victoria!
But these loud clamours better news presage.

Enter the Duke of ARCOS, *and Soldiers; their Swords drawn and bloody.*

D. Arcos. Granada now is yours; and there remain
No Moors, but such as own the power of Spain.
That squadron, which their king in person led,
We charged, but found Almanzor in their head:
Three several times we did the Moors attack,
And thrice with slaughter did he drive us back:
Our troops then shrunk; and still we lost more ground,
'Till from our queen we needful succour found:
Her guards to our assistance bravely flew,
And with fresh vigour did the fight renew:
At the same time
Did Lyndaraxa with her troops appear,
And, while we charged the front, engaged the rear:
Then fell the king, slain by a Zegry's hand.
K. Ferd. How could he such united force withstand?
D. Arcos. Discouraged with his death, the Moorish powers
Fell back, and, falling back, were pressed by ours;
But as, when winds and rain together crowd,
They swell till they have burst the bladdered cloud;

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And first the lightning, flashing deadly clear,
Flies, falls, consumes, kills ere it does appear,—
So, from his shrinking troops, Almanzor flew,
Each blow gave wounds, and with each wound he slew:
His force at once I envied and admired,
And rushing forward, where my men retired,
Advanced alone.
K. Ferd. You hazarded too far
Your person, and the fortune of the war.
D. Arcos. Already both our arms for fight did bare,
Already held them threatening in the air,
When heaven (it must be heaven) my sight did guide
To view his arm, upon whose wrist I spied
A ruby cross in diamond bracelets tied;
And just above it, in the brawnier part,
By nature was engraved a bloody heart:
Struck with these tokens, which so well I knew,
And staggering back some paces, I withdrew:
He followed, and supposed it was my fear;
When, from above, a shrill voice reached his ear:—
"Strike not thy father!"—it was heard to cry;
Amazed, and casting round his wondrous eye,
He stopped; then, thinking that his fears were vain,
He lifted up his thundering arm again:
Again the voice withheld him from my death;
"Spare, spare his life," it cried, "who gave thee breath!"
Once more he stopped; then threw his sword away;
"Blessed shade," he said, "I hear thee, I obey
Thy sacred voice;" then, in the sight of all,
He at my feet, I on his neck did fall.

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K. Ferd. O blessed event!
D. Arcos. The Moors no longer fought;
But all their safety by submission sought:
Meantime my son grew faint with loss of blood,
And on his bending sword supported stood;
Yet, with a voice beyond his strength, he cried,
"Lead me to live or die by Almahide."
K. Ferd. I am not for his wounds less grieved than you:
For, if what now my soul divines prove true,
This is that son, whom in his infancy
You lost, when by my father forced to fly.
D. Arcos. His sister's beauty did my passion move,
(The crime for which I suffered was my love.)
Our marriage known, to sea we took our flight:
There, in a storm, Almanzor first saw light.
On his right arm a bloody heart was graved,
(The mark by which, this day, my life was saved:)
The bracelets and the cross his mother tied
About his wrist, ere she in childbed died.
How we were captive made, when she was dead,
And how Almanzor was in Afric bred,
Some other hour you may at leisure hear,
For see, the queen in triumph does appear.

Enter Queen ISABELLA, LYNDARAXA, *Ladies, Moors and Spaniards mixed as Guards,* ABDELMELECH, ABENAMAR, SELIN, *Prisoners.*

K. Ferd. [*embracing Q. Isabel.*] All stories which Granada's conquest tell,
Shall celebrate the name of Isabel.
Your ladies too, who, in their country's cause,
Led on the men, shall share in your applause;
And, for your sakes, henceforward I ordain,
No lady's dower shall questioned be in Spain.

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Fair Lyndaraxa, for the help she lent,
Shall, under tribute, have this government.
Abdelm. O heaven, that I should live to see this day!
Lyndar. You murmur now, but you shall soon obey.
I knew this empire to my fate was owed;
Heaven held it back as long as e'er it could.
For thee, base wretch, I want a torture yet—
[*To* ABDELM.
I 'll cage thee; thou shalt be my Bajazet,
I on no pavement but on thee will tread;
And, when I mount, my foot shall know thy head.
Abdelm. (*Stabbing her with a poniard.*) This first shall know thy heart.
Lyndar. O! I am slain!
Abdelm. Now, boast thy country is betrayed to Spain.
K. Ferd. Look to the lady!—Seize the murderer!
Abdelm. (*Stabbing himself.*) I do myself that justice I did her.
Thy blood I to thy ruined country give,
[*To* LYNDAR.
But love too well thy murder to outlive.
Forgive a love, excused by its excess,
Which, had it not been cruel, had been less.
Condemn my passion, then, but pardon me,
And think I murdered him who murdered thee.
[*Dies.*
Lyndar. Die for us both; I have not leisure now;
A crown is come, and will not fate allow:
And yet I feel something like death is near.
My guards, my guards,—
Let not that ugly skeleton appear!

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Sure destiny mistakes; this death 's not mine;
She dotes, and meant to cut another line.
Tell her I am a queen;——but 'tis too late;
Dying, I charge rebellion on my fate,
Bow down, ye slaves:—— [*To the Moors.*
Bow quickly down, and your submission show.—
[*They bow.*
I 'm pleased to taste an empire ere I go. [*Dies.*

Selin. She 's dead, and here her proud ambition ends.

Aben. Such fortune still such black designs attends.

K. Ferd. Remove those mournful objects from our eyes,
And see performed their funeral obsequies.
[*The bodies are carried off.*

Enter ALMANZOR *and* ALMAHIDE, OZMYN *and* BENZAYDA; ALMAHIDE *brought in a chair;* ALMANZOR *led betwixt Soldiers.* ISABELLA *salutes* ALMAHIDE *in dumb show.*

D. Arcos. (*Presenting* ALMANZOR *to the King.*)
See here that son, whom I with pride call mine;
And who dishonours not your royal line.

K. Ferd. I 'm now secure, this sceptre, which I gain,
Shall be continued in the power of Spain;
Since he, who could alone my foes defend,
By birth and honour is become my friend;
Yet I can own no joy, nor conquest boast,
[*To* ALMANZ.
While in this blood I see how dear it cost.

Almanz. This honour to my veins new blood will bring;
Streams cannot fail, fed by so high a spring.
But all court-customs I so little know,
That I may fail in those respects I owe.

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I bring a heart which homage never knew;
Yet it finds something of itself in you:
Something so kingly, that my haughty mind
Is drawn to yours, because 'tis of a kind.
Q. Isabel. And yet that soul, which bears itself so high,
If fame be true, admits a sovereignty.
This queen, in her fair eyes, such fetters brings,
As chain that heart, which scorns the power of kings.
Almah. Little of charm in these sad eyes appears;
If they had any, now 'tis lost in tears.
A crown, and husband, ravished in one day!—
Excuse a grief, I cannot choose but pay.
Q. Isabel. Have courage, madam; heaven has joys in store,
To recompense those losses you deplore.
Almah. I know your God can all my woes redress;
To him I made my vows in my distress:
And, what a misbeliever vowed this day,
Though not a queen, a Christian yet shall pay.
Q. Isabel. (*Embracing her.*) That Christian name you shall receive from me,
And Isabella of Granada be.
Benz. This blessed change we all with joy receive;
And beg to learn that faith which you believe.
Q. Isabel. With reverence for those holy rites prepare;
And all commit your fortunes to my care.
K. Ferd. to *Almah.* You, madam, by that crown you lose, may gain,
If you accept, a coronet of Spain,
Of which Almanzor's father stands possest.
Q. Isabel. to *Almah.* May you in him, and he in you, be blest!

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Almah. I owe my life and honour to his sword;
But owe my love to my departed lord.
Almanz. Thus, when I have no living force to dread,
Fate finds me enemies amongst the dead.
I 'm now to conquer ghosts, and to destroy
The strong impressions of a bridal joy.
Almah. You 've yet a greater foe than these can be,—
Virtue opposes you, and modesty.
Almanz. From a false fear that modesty does grow,
And thinks true love, because 'tis fierce, its foe.
'Tis but the wax whose seals on virgins stay:
Let it approach love's fire, 'twill melt away:—
But I have lived too long; I never knew,
When fate was conquered, I must combat you.
I thought to climb the steep ascent of love;
But did not think to find a foe above.
'Tis time to die, when you my bar must be,
Whose aid alone could give me victory;
Without,
I 'll pull up all the sluices of the flood,
And love, within, shall boil out all my blood.
Q. Isabel. Fear not your love should find so sad success,
While I have power to be your patroness.
I am her parent now, and may command
So much of duty as to give her hand.
[*Gives him* ALMAHIDE's *hand.*
Almah. Madam, I never can dispute your power,
Or as a parent, or a conqueror;
But, when my year of widowhood expires,
Shall yield to your command, and his desires.
Almanz. Move swiftly, sun, and fly a lover's pace;
Leave weeks and months behind thee in thy race!

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K. Ferd. Meantime, you shall my victories pursue,
The Moors in woods and mountains to subdue.
Almanz. The toils of war shall help to wear each day,
And dreams of love shall drive my nights away.—
Our banners to the Alhambra's turrets bear;
Then, wave our conquering crosses in the air,
And cry, with shouts of triumph,—Live and reign,
Great Ferdinand and Isabel of Spain!

[*Exeunt.*

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EPILOGUE.

THEY, who have best succeeded on the stage,
Have still conformed their genius to their age.
Thus Jonson did mechanic humour show,
When men were dull, and conversation low.
Then comedy was faultless, but 'twas coarse:
Cobb's tankard was a jest, and Otter's horse.*
And, as their comedy, their love was mean;
Except, by chance, in some one laboured scene,
Which must atone for an ill-written play,
They rose, but at their height could seldom stay.
Fame then was cheap, and the first comer sped;
And they have kept it since, by being dead.
But, were they now to write, when critics weigh
Each line, and every word, throughout a play,
None of them, no, not Jonson in his height,
Could pass, without allowing grains for weight.
Think it not envy, that these truths are told;
Our poet's not malicious, though he's bold.
'Tis not to brand them, that their faults are shown,
But, by their errors, to excuse his own.
If love and honour now are higher raised,
'Tis not the poet, but the age is praised.
Wit's now arrived to a more high degree;
Our native language more refined and free.
Our ladies and our men now speak more wit
In conversation, than those poets writ.
Then, one of these is, consequently, true;
That what this poet writes comes short of you,
And imitates you ill (which most he fears),
Or else his writing is not worse than theirs.
Yet, though you judge (as sure the critics will),
That some before him writ with greater skill,
In this one praise he has their fame surpast,
To please an age more gallant than the last.

* The characters alluded to are Cobb, the water-bearer, in "Every Man in his Humour;" and Captain Otter, in "Epicœne, or the Silent Woman," whose humour it was to christen his drinking-cups by the names of Horse, Bull, and Bear.

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DEFENCE

OF

THE EPILOGUE;

OR,

AN ESSAY ON THE DRAMATIC POETRY OF THE LAST AGE.

THE promises of authors, that they will write again, are, in effect, a threatening of their readers with some new impertinence; and they, who perform not what they promise, will have their pardon on easy terms. It is from this consideration, that I could be glad to spare you the trouble, which I am now giving you, of a post-script,* if I were not obliged, by many reasons, to write somewhat concerning our present plays, and those of our predecessors on the English stage. The truth is, I have so far engaged myself in a bold epilogue to this play, wherein I have somewhat taxed the former writing, that it was necessary for me either not to print it, or to show that I could defend it. Yet I would so maintain my opinion of the present age, as not to be wanting in my veneration for the past: I would ascribe to dead authors their just praises

* [In 1st edition, by oversight, "preface."—ED.]

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in those things wherein they have excelled us; and in those wherein we contend with them for the pre-eminence, I would acknowledge our advantages to the age, and claim no victory from our wit. This being what I have proposed to myself, I hope I shall not be thought arrogant when I inquire into their errors; For we live in an age so sceptical, that as it determines little, so it takes nothing from antiquity on trust; and I profess to have no other ambition in this essay, than that poetry may not go backward, when all other arts and sciences are advancing. Whoever censures me for this inquiry, let him hear his character from Horace:

Ingeniis non ille favet, plauditque sepultis,
Nostra sed impugnat; nos nostraque lividus odit.

He favours not dead wits, but hates the living.

It was upbraided to that excellent poet, that he was an enemy to the writings of his predecessor Lucilius, because he had said, *Lucilium lutulentum* fluere*, that he ran muddy; and that he ought to have retrenched from his satires many unnecessary verses. But Horace makes Lucilius himself to justify him from the imputation of envy, by telling you that he would have done the same, had he lived in an age which was more refined:

Si foret hoc nostrum fato delapsus in ævum,
Detereret sibi multa, recideret* omne quod ultra*
Perfectum traheretur, etc.

And, both in the whole course of that satire, and in his most admirable Epistle to Augustus, he makes it his business to prove, that antiquity alone is no plea for the excellency of a poem;

* [In 1st edition, "luculentum," "detraherit," and "recederet," obviously from hasty printing.—Ed.]

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but that, one age learning from another, the last (if we can suppose an equality of wit in the writers) has the advantage of knowing more and better than the former. And this, I think, is the state of the question in dispute. It is therefore my part to make it clear, that the language, wit, and conversation of our age, are improved and refined above the last; and then it will not be difficult to infer, that our plays have received some part of those advantages.

In the first place, therefore, it will be necessary to state, in general, what this refinement is, of which we treat; and that, I think, will not be defined amiss, "An improvement of our Wit, Language, and Conversation; or, an alteration in them for the better."

To begin with Language. That an alteration is lately made in ours, or since the writers of the last age (in which I comprehend Shakespeare, Fletcher, and Jonson), is manifest. Any man who reads those excellent poets, and compares their language with what is now written, will see it almost in every line; but that this is an improvement of the language, or an alteration for the better, will not so easily be granted. For many are of a contrary opinion, that the English tongue was then in the height of its perfection; that from Jonson's time to ours it has been in a continual declination, like that of the Romans from the age of Virgil to Statius, and so downward to Claudian; of which, not only Petronius, but Quintilian himself so much complains, under the person of *Secundus*, in his famous dialogue *De Causis corruptæ Eloquentiæ*.*

But, to show that our language is improved,

* [Not now generally thought to be Quintilian's.—Ed.]

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and that those people have not a just value for the age in which they live, let us consider in what the refinement of a language principally consists: that is, "either in rejecting such old words, or phrases, which are ill sounding, or improper; or in admitting new, which are more proper, more sounding, and more significant."

The reader will easily take notice, that when I speak of rejecting improper words and phrases, I mention not such as are antiquated by custom only, and, as I may say, without any fault of theirs. For in this case the refinement can be but accidental; that is, when the words and phrases, which are rejected, happen to be improper. Neither would I be understood, when I speak of impropriety of language, either wholly to accuse the last age, or to excuse the present, and least of all myself; for all writers have their imperfections and failings: but I may safely conclude in the general, that our improprieties are less frequent, and less gross than theirs. One testimony of this is undeniable, that we are the first who have observed them; and, certainly, to observe errors is a great step to the correcting of them. But, malice and partiality set apart, let any man, who understands English, read diligently the works of Shakespeare and Fletcher, and I dare undertake, that he will find in every page either some solecism of speech, or some notorious flaw in sense;* and yet these men are reverenced, when we are not forgiven. That their wit is great, and many times their expressions noble, envy itself cannot deny.

* In mitigation of the censure which must be passed on our author for this hasty and ill-considered judgment, let us remember the very inaccurate manner in which Shakespeare's plays were printed in the early editions.

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Neque ego illis detrahere ausim
Hærentem capiti multâ cum laude coronam.

But the times were ignorant in which they lived. Poetry was then, if not in its infancy among us, at least not arrived to its vigour and maturity: Witness the lameness of their plots; many of which, especially those which they writ first (for even that age refined itself in some measure), were made up of some ridiculous incoherent story, which in one play many times took up the business of an age. I suppose I need not name "Pericles, Prince of Tyre," nor the historical plays of Shakespeare: besides many of the rest, as the "Winter's Tale," "Love's Labour Lost," "Measure for Measure," which were either grounded on impossibilities, or at least so meanly written, that the comedy neither caused your mirth, nor the serious part your concernment.* If I would expatiate on this subject, I could easily demonstrate, that our admired Fletcher, who writ after him, neither understood correct plotting, nor that which they call "the decorum of the stage." I would not search in his worst plays for examples: He who will consider his "Philaster," his "Humorous Lieutenant," his "Faithful Shepherdess," and many others which I could name, will find them much below the applause which is now given them. He will see Philaster wounding his mistress, and afterwards his boy, to save himself; not to mention the Clown, who enters immediately, and not only has the advantage of the combat against the hero,

* Mr. Malone has judiciously remarked, that Dryden seems to have been ignorant of the order in which Shakespeare wrote his plays; and there will be charity in believing, that he was not intimately acquainted with those he so summarily and unjustly censures.

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but diverts you from your serious concernment, with his ridiculous and absurd raillery. In his "Humorous Lieutenant," you find his Demetrius and Leontius staying in the midst of a routed army, to hear the cold mirth of the Lieutenant; and Demetrius afterwards appearing with a pistol in his hand, in the next age to Alexander the Great.* And for his Shepherd, he falls twice into the former indecency of wounding women. But these absurdities, which those poets committed, may more properly be called the age's fault than theirs. For, besides the want of education and learning (which was their particular unhappiness), they wanted the benefit of converse: But of that I shall speak hereafter, in a place more proper for it. Their audiences knew no better; and therefore were satisfied with what they brought. Those, who call theirs the golden age of poetry, have only this reason for it, that they were then content with acorns before they knew the use of bread; or that Ἅλις δρυὸς was become a proverb. They had many who admired them, and few who blamed them; and certainly a severe critic is the greatest help to a good wit: he does the office of a friend, while he designs that of an enemy; and his malice keeps a poet within those bounds, which the luxuriancy of his fancy would tempt him to overleap.

But it is not their plots which I meant principally to tax; I was speaking of their sense and language; and I dare almost challenge any man

* In these criticisms, we see the effects of the refinement which our stage had now borrowed from the French. It is probable, that, in the age of heroic plays, any degree of dulness, or extravagance, would have been tolerated in the dialogue, rather than an offence against the decorum of the scene.

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to show me a page together which is correct in both. As for Ben Jonson, I am loath to name him, because he is a most judicious writer; yet he very often falls into these errors: and I once more beg the reader's pardon for accusing him of them. Only let him consider, that I live in an age where my least faults are severely censured; and that I have no way left to extenuate my failings, but by showing as great in those whom we admire:

Cædimus, inque vicem præbemus crura sagittis.

I cast my eyes but by chance on Catiline; and in the three or four last pages, found enough to conclude that Jonson writ not correctly.

> Let the long-hid seeds
> Of treason, in thee, now shoot forth in deeds
> Ranker than horror.

In reading some bombast speeches of Macbeth, which are not to be understood, he used to say that it was horror; and I am much afraid that this is so.

> Thy parricide late on thy only son,
> After his mother, to make empty way
> For thy last wicked nuptials, worse than they
> That blaze that act of thy incestuous life,
> Which gained thee at once a daughter and a wife.

The sense is here extremely perplexed; and I doubt the word *they* is false grammar.

> And be free
> Not heaven itself from thy impiety.

A synchysis, or ill-placing of words, of which Tully so much complains in oratory.

> The waves and dens of beasts could not receive
> The bodies that those souls were frighted *from*.

The preposition in the end of the sentence; a

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common fault with him, and which I have but lately observed in my own writings.

> What all the several ills that visit earth,
> Plague, famine, fire, could not reach *unto*,
> The sword, nor surfeits, let thy fury do.

Here are both the former faults: for, besides that the preposition *unto* is placed last in the verse, and at the half period, and is redundant, there is the former synchysis in the words "the sword, nor surfeits," which in construction ought to have been placed before the other.

Catiline says of Cethegus, that for his sake he would

> *Go on upon* the gods, kiss lightning, wrest
> The engine from the Cyclops, and *give fire*
> *At face of a full cloud*, and stand *his ire*.

To "go on upon," is only to go on twice.* To "give fire at face of a full cloud," was not understood in his own time; "and stand *his ire*," besides the antiquated word *ire*, there is the article *his*, which makes false construction: and giving fire at the face of a cloud, is a perfect image of shooting, however it came to be known in those days to Catiline.

> Others there are,
> Whom envy to the state draws and pulls on,
> For contumelies received; and such are sure *ones*.

Ones, in the plural number: but that is frequent with him; for he says, not long after,

> Cæsar and Crassus, if they be ill men,
> Are mighty *ones*.
> Such men, *they* do not succour more the cause, etc.

They redundant.

---

* Jonson seems to have used it for to *go on against*.

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Though heaven should speak with all *his* wrath at once,
We should stand upright and *unfeared*.

His is ill syntax with *heaven;* and by *unfeared* he means *unafraid:* words of a quite contrary signification.

"The ports are open." He perpetually uses ports for gates; which is an affected error in him, to introduce Latin by the loss of the English idiom; as, in the translation of Tully's speeches he usually does.

Well-placing of words, for the sweetness of pronunciation, was not known till Mr. Waller introduced it; and, therefore, it is not to be wondered if Ben Jonson has many such lines as these:

"But being bred up in his father's needy fortunes; brought up in 's sister's prostitution," etc.

But meanness of expression one would think not to be his error in a tragedy, which ought to be more high and sounding than any other kind of poetry; and yet, amongst others in "Catiline," I find these four lines together:

So Asia, thou art cruelly even
With us, for all the blows thee given;
When we, whose virtues conquered thee,
Thus by thy vices ruined be.

Be there is false English for *are;* though the rhyme hides it.

But I am willing to close the book, partly out of veneration to the author, partly out of weariness to pursue an argument which is so fruitful in so small a compass. And what correctness, after this, can be expected from Shakespeare or from Fletcher, who wanted that learning and care which Jonson had? I will, therefore, spare

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my own trouble of inquiring into their faults; who, had they lived now, had doubtless written more correctly. I suppose it will be enough for me to affirm (as I think I safely may), that these, and the like errors, which I taxed in the most correct of the last age, are such into which we do not ordinarily fall. I think few of our present writers would have left behind them such a line as this:

Contain your spirit in more stricter bounds.

But that gross way of two comparatives was then ordinary; and, therefore, more pardonable in Jonson.

As for the other part of refining, which consists in receiving new words and phrases, I shall not insist much on it. It is obvious that we have admitted many, some of which we wanted, and therefore our language is the richer for them, as it would be by importation of bullion: Others are rather ornamental than necessary; yet, by their admission, the language is become more courtly, and our thoughts are better drest. These are to be found scattered in the writers of our age, and it is not my business to collect them. They, who have lately written with most care, have, I believe, taken the rule of Horace for their guide; that is, not to be too hasty in receiving of words, but rather to stay till custom has made them familiar to us:

Quem penes arbitrium est, et jus, et norma loquendi.

For I cannot approve of their way of refining, who corrupt our English idiom by mixing it too much with French: That is a sophistication of language, not an improvement of it; a turning English into French, rather than a refining of

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English by French. We meet daily with those fops, who value themselves on their travelling, and pretend they cannot express their meaning in English, because they would put off to us some French phrase of the last edition; without considering, that, for aught they know, we have a better of our own. But these are not the men who are to refine us; their talent is to prescribe fashions, not words: at best, they are only serviceable to a writer, so as Ennius was to Virgil. He may *aurum ex stercore colligere:* For it is hard if, amongst many insignificant phrases, there happen not something worth preserving; though they themselves, like Indians, know not the value of their own commodity.

There is yet another way of improving language, which poets especially have practised in all ages; that is, by applying received words to a new signification; and this, I believe, is meant by Horace, in that precept which is so variously construed by expositors:

> *Dixeris egregie, notum si callida verbum*
> *Reddiderit junctura novum.*

And, in this way, he himself had a particular happiness; using all the tropes, and particular metaphors, with that grace which is observable in his Odes, where the beauty of expression is often greater than that of thought; as, in that one example, amongst an infinite number of others, "*Et vultus nimium lubricus aspici.*"

And therefore, though he innovated little, he may justly be called a great refiner of the Roman tongue. This choice of words, and heightening of their natural signification, was observed in him by the writers of the following ages; for Petronius says of him, "*Et Horatii curiosa*

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felicitas." By this graffing, as I may call it, on old words, has our tongue been beautified by the three fore-mentioned poets, Shakespeare, Fletcher, and Jonson, whose excellencies I can never enough admire; and in this they have been followed, especially by Sir John Suckling and Mr. Waller, who refined upon them. Neither have they, who succeeded them, been wanting in their endeavours to adorn our mother tongue: But it is not so lawful for me to praise my living contemporaries, as to admire my dead predecessors.

I should now speak of the refinement of Wit; but I have been so large on the former subject, that I am forced to contract myself in this. I will therefore only observe to you, that the wit of the last age was yet more incorrect than their language. Shakespeare, who many times has written better than any poet, in any language, is yet so far from writing wit always, or expressing that wit according to the dignity of the subject, that he writes, in many places, below the dullest writers of ours, or any precedent age. Never did any author precipitate himself from such height of thought to so low expressions, as he often does. He is the very Janus of poets; he wears almost everywhere two faces; and you have scarce begun to admire the one, ere you despise the other. Neither is the luxuriance of Fletcher, which his friends have taxed in him, a less fault than the carelessness of Shakespeare. He does not well always; and, when he does, he is a true Englishman,—he knows not when to give over. If he wakes in one scene, he commonly slumbers in another; and, if he pleases you in the first three acts, he is frequently so tired with his labour, that he goes heavily in the fourth, and sinks under his burden in the fifth.

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For Ben Jonson, the most judicious of poets, he always writ properly, and as the character required; and I will not contest farther with my friends, who call that wit: it being very certain, that even folly itself, well represented, is wit in a larger signification; and that there is fancy, as well as judgment, in it, though not so much or noble: because all poetry being imitation, that of folly is a lower exercise of fancy, though perhaps as difficult as the other; for it is a kind of looking downward in the poet, and representing that part of mankind which is below him.

In these low characters of vice and folly, lay the excellency of that inimitable writer; who, when at any time he aimed at wit in the stricter sense, that is, sharpness of conceit, was forced either to borrow from the ancients, as to my knowledge he did very much from Plautus; or, when he trusted himself alone, often fell into meanness of expression. Nay, he was not free from the lowest and most grovelling kind of wit, which we call clenches,* of which "Every Man in his Humour" is infinitely full; and, which is worse, the wittiest persons in the drama speak them. His other comedies are not exempt from them. Will you give me leave to name some few? Asper,† in which character he personates himself (and he neither was nor thought himself a fool), exclaiming against the ignorant judges of the age, speaks thus:

> How monstrous and detested is 't, to see
> A fellow, that has neither art nor brain,
> Sit like an *Aristarchus*, or, *stark-ass*,
> Taking men's lines, with a *tobacco face*,
> In *snuff*, etc.

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* ["Puns."—Ed.]

† [In *Every Man out of his Humour*.—Ed.]

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And presently after: "I marvel whose wit 'twas to put a prologue in yond Sackbut's mouth. They might well think he would be out of tune, and yet you 'd play upon him too."—Will you have another of the same stamp? "O, I cannot abide these limbs of *sattin*, or rather *Satan*."

But, it may be, you will object that this was Asper, Macilente, or Carlo Buffone: you shall, therefore, hear him speak in his own person, and that in the two last lines, or sting of an epigram. It is inscribed to *Fine Grand*, who, he says, was indebted to him for many things which he reckons there; and concludes thus:

> Forty things more, dear *Grand*, which you know true,
> For which, or pay me quickly, or I 'll pay you.

This was then the mode of wit, the vice of the age, and not Ben Jonson's; for you see, a little before him, that admirable wit, Sir Philip Sidney, perpetually playing with his words. In his time, I believe, it ascended first into the pulpit, where (if you will give me leave to clench too) it yet finds the benefit of its clergy; for they are commonly the first corrupters of eloquence, and the last reformed from vicious oratory; as a famous Italian* has observed before me, in his Treatise of the Corruption of the Italian Tongue; which he principally ascribes to priests and preaching friars.

But, to conclude with what brevity I can, I will only add this, in defence of our present writers, that, if they reach not some excellencies of Ben Jonson (which no age, I am confident, ever shall), yet, at least, they are above that meanness of thought which I have taxed, and which is frequent in him.

* [Not yet identified. I shall return to him.—Ed.]

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That the wit of this age is much more courtly, may easily be proved, by viewing the characters of gentlemen which were written in the last. First, for Jonson:—Truewit, in the "Silent Woman," was his masterpiece; and Truewit was a scholar-like kind of man, a gentleman with an allay of pedantry, a man who seems mortified to the world, by much reading. The best of his discourse is drawn, not from the knowledge of the town, but books; and, in short, he would be a fine gentleman in an university. Shakespeare showed the best of his skill in his Mercutio; and he said himself, that he was forced to kill him in the third act, to prevent being killed by him. But, for my part, I cannot find he was so dangerous a person: I see nothing in him but what was so exceeding harmless, that he might have lived to the end of the play, and died in his bed, without offence to any man.

Fletcher's Don John is our only bugbear; and yet I may affirm, without suspicion of flattery, that he now speaks better, and that his character is maintained with much more vigour in the fourth and fifth acts, than it was by Fletcher in the three former. I have always acknowledged the wit of our predecessors, with all the veneration which becomes me; but, I am sure, their wit was not that of gentlemen; there was ever somewhat that was ill-bred and clownish in it, and which confessed the conversation of the authors.

And this leads me to the last and greatest advantage of our writing, which proceeds from conversation. In the age wherein those poets lived, there was less of gallantry than in ours; neither did they keep the best company of theirs.

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Their fortune has been much like that of Epicurus, in the retirement of his gardens; to live almost unknown, and to be celebrated after their decease. I cannot find that any of them had been conversant in courts, except Ben Jonson; and his genius lay not so much that way, as to make an improvement by it. Greatness was not then so easy of access, nor conversation so free, as now it is. I cannot, therefore, conceive it any insolence to affirm, that, by the knowledge and pattern of their wit who writ before us, and by the advantage of our own conversation, the discourse and raillery of our comedies excel what has been written by them. And this will be denied by none, but some few old fellows who value themselves on their acquaintance with the Black Friars; who, because they saw their plays, would pretend a right to judge ours. The memory of these grave gentlemen is their only plea for being wits. They can tell a story of Ben Jonson, and, perhaps, have had fancy enough to give a supper in the Apollo, that they might be called his sons:* And, because they were drawn in to be laughed at in those times, they think themselves now sufficiently entitled to laugh at ours. Learning I never saw in any of them; and wit no more than they could remember. In short,

* The Apollo was Ben Jonson's favourite club-room in the Devil Tavern. The custom of adopting his admirers and imitators, by bestowing upon them the title of Son, is often alluded to in his works. In Dryden's time, the fashion had so far changed, that the poetical progeny of old Ben seem to have incurred more ridicule than honour by this ambitious distinction. Oldwit, in Shadwell's play, called Bury Fair, is described as "a paltry old-fashioned wit and punner of the last age, that pretends to have been one of Ben Jonson's sons, and to have seen plays at the Blackfriars."

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they were unlucky to have been bred in an unpolished age, and more unlucky to live to a refined one. They have lasted beyond their own, and are cast behind ours; and, not contented to have known little at the age of twenty, they boast of their ignorance at threescore.

Now, if they ask me, whence it is that our conversation is so much refined? I must freely, and without flattery, ascribe it to the court; and, in it, particularly to the king, whose example gives a law to it. His own misfortunes, and the nation's, afforded him an opportunity, which is rarely allowed to sovereign princes, I mean of travelling, and being conversant in the most polished courts of Europe; and, thereby, of cultivating a spirit which was formed by nature to receive the impressions of a gallant and generous education. At his return, he found a nation lost as much in barbarism as in rebellion: And, as the excellency of his nature forgave the one, so the excellency of his manners reformed the other. The desire of imitating so great a pattern first awakened the dull and heavy spirits of the English from their natural reservedness; loosened them from their stiff forms of conversation, and made them easy and pliant to each other in discourse. Thus, insensibly, our way of living became more free; and the fire of the English wit, which was before stifled under a constrained, melancholy way of breeding, began first to display its force, by mixing the solidity of our nation with the air and gaiety of our neighbours.* This being

* This passage, though complimentary to Charles, contains much sober truth: Having considerable taste for the Belles Lettres, he cultivated them during his exile, and was naturally

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granted to be true, it would be a wonder if the poets, whose work is imitation, should be the only persons in three kingdoms who should not receive advantage by it; or, if they should not more easily imitate the wit and conversation of the present age than of the past.

Let us therefore admire the beauties and the heights of Shakespeare, without falling after him into a carelessness, and, as I may call it, a lethargy of thought, for whole scenes together. Let us imitate, as we are able, the quickness and easiness of Fletcher, without proposing him as a pattern to us, either in the redundancy of his matter, or the incorrectness of his language. Let us admire his wit and sharpness of conceit; but let us at the same time acknowledge, that it was seldom so fixed, and made proper to his character, as that the same things might not be spoken by any person in the play. Let us applaud his scenes of love; but let us confess, that he understood not either greatness or perfect honour in the parts of any of his women. In fine, let us allow, that he had so much fancy, as when he pleased he could write wit; but that he wanted so much judgment, as seldom to have written humour, or described a pleasant folly. Let us ascribe to Jonson, the height and accuracy of judgment in the ordering of his plots, his choice of characters, and maintaining what he had chosen to the end: But let us not think him a perfect pattern of imitation, except it be in humour; for love, which is the foundation of

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swayed by the French rules of composition, particularly as applicable to the Theatre. These he imported with him at his Restoration; and hence arose the Heroic Drama, so much cultivated by our author.

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all comedies in other languages, is scarcely mentioned in any of his plays: And for humour itself, the poets of this age will be more wary than to imitate the meanness of his persons. Gentlemen will now be entertained with the follies of each other; and, though they allow Cobb and Tib to speak properly, yet they are not much pleased with their tankard, or with their rags: And surely their conversation can be no jest to them on the theatre, when they would avoid it in the street.

To conclude all, let us render to our predecessors what is their due, without confining ourselves to a servile imitation of all they writ; and, without assuming to ourselves the title of better poets, let us ascribe to the gallantry and civility of our age the advantage which we have above them, and, to our knowledge of the customs and manners of it, the happiness we have to please beyond them.

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THE bold Epilogue, which is here defended with so much animation, and the censure which it threw on the fathers of the stage, seems to have given great offence. It is thus severely assailed by Rochester:

> But does not Dryden find even Jonson dull?
> Beaumont and Fletcher incorrect, and full
> Of lewd lines, as he calls them? Shakespeare's style
> Stiff and affected? to his own, the while,
> Allowing all the justice that his pride
> So arrogantly had to these denied:
> And may I not have leave impartially
> To search and censure Dryden's works, and try
> If those gross faults, his choice pen doth commit,
> Proceed from want of judgment, or of wit?
> Or if his lumpish fancy doth refuse
> Spirit and grace to his loose slattern muse?
> Five hundred verses, every morning writ,
> Prove him no more a poet than a wit.

It is a bold, perhaps a presumptuous task, to attempt to separate the true from the false criticism in the foregoing essay; for who is qualified to be umpire betwixt Shakespeare and Dryden? Nevertheless, our knowledge of the manners of the respective ages which these extraordinary men adorned, and the remoteness of our own from both, may enable us, with impartiality at least, to sift the grounds of Dryden's censure. The nature of the stage in the days of Shakespeare has been ascertained, by the sedulous exertions of his commentators. A variety of small theatres, all of them accessible to the lowest of the people, poor and rude in all the arts of decoration, were dispersed through London when Shakespeare and Jonson wrote for the stage. It was a natural consequence, that the writings of these great men were biassed by the taste of those for whom they wrote;

> For those, who live to please, must please, to live.

Art was not demanded; and when used by Jonson, he complains it was not duly appreciated. Men of a middle rank were then probably worse educated than our mere vulgar.

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But the good old time bore rough and manly spirits, who came prepared with a tribute of tears and laughter, to bursts of pathos, or effusions of humour, although incapable of receiving the delights which a cultivated mind derives from the gradual development of a story, the just dependence of its parts upon each other, the minute beauties of language, and the absence of everything incongruous or indecorous. Dryden, on the other hand, wrote for a stage patronised by a monarch and his courtiers, who were professed judges of dramatic composition; while the rigour of religious prejudice, and perhaps a just abhorrence of the licentious turn of the drama, banished from the theatres a great proportion of the middle classes, always the most valuable part of an audience; because, with a certain degree of cultivation, they unite an unhackneyed energy of feeling. Art, therefore, became, in the days of Dryden, not only a requisite qualification, but even the principal attribute of the dramatic poet. He was to address himself to the heads and judgments of his audience, on the acuteness of which they piqued themselves; not to their feelings, stupefied, probably, by selfish dissipation. Even the acquisition and exercise of critical knowledge tends to blunt the sense of natural beauties, as a refined harmonist becomes indifferent to the strains of simple melody. Hence the sacrifices which Shakespeare made, without being aware, to the taste of his age, were amply compensated by his being called upon, and, as it were, compelled, by the nature of his audience, to rouse them with his thunder, and to melt them with his dew. I question much if the age of Charles II. would have borne the introduction of Othello or Falstaff. We may find something like Dryden's self-complacent opinion expressed by the editor of Corneille,* where he civilly admits, "*Corneille était inégal comme Shakespeare, et plein de génie comme lui: mais le génie de Corneille était à celui de Shakespeare ce qu'un seigneur est à l'égard d'un homme de peuple, né avec le même esprit que lui.*" In other words, the works of the one retain the rough bold tints of nature and originality, while those of the other are qualified by the artificial restraints which fashion imposes upon the *homme de condition.* It is, therefore, unjustly, that Dryden dwells so long on Shakespeare's irregularities, amongst which I cannot help suspecting he includes some of his greatest beauties. While we do not defend his quibbles and carwitchets, as Bibber would have termed them, we may rejoice that he purchased, at so

* [Voltaire.—Ed.]

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slight a sacrifice, the power and privilege of launching into every subject with a liberty as unbounded as his genius;

> As there is music, uninformed by art,
> In those wild notes, which, with a merry heart,
> The birds in unfrequented shades express,
> Which better taught at home, yet please us less.

[It may be repeated that the subject of Dryden's relations with the older dramatists, being too large for a note, will be treated in the Appendix.—Ed.]

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MARRIAGE A LA MODE:

A COMEDY.

——— *Quicquid sum ego, quamvis*
Infra Lucili censum ingeniumque, tamen me
Cum magnis vixisse, invita fatebitur usque
Invidia, et fragili quærens illidere dentem,
Offendet solido. HORAT. SERM.

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[Title and Motto as above, with "As it is acted at the Theatre Royal; Written by John Dryden, Servant to his Majesty," between; and, following motto,—"London: Printed by T. N. for Henry Herringman, and are to be sold at the Anchor in the Lower Walk of the New Exchange, 1673.—Ed.]

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MARRIAGE A LA MODE.

MARRIAGE A LA MODE was one of Dryden's most successful comedies. A venerable praiser of the past time, in a curious letter printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1745, gives us this account of its first representation. "This comedy, acted by his Majesty's servants at the Theatre-Royal, made its first appearance with extraordinary lustre. Divesting myself of the old man, I solemnly declare, that you have seen no such acting, no, not in any degree since. The players were then, 1673, on a court establishment, seventeen men, and eight women."—*Gent. Mag.* vol. xv. p. 99. From a copy of verses, to which this letter is annexed, we learn the excellence of the various performers by whom the piece was first presented. They are addressed to a young actress.

Henceforth, in livelier characters excel,
Though 'tis great merit to act folly well;
Take, take from Dryden's hand Melantha's part,
The gaudy effort of luxuriant art,
In all imagination's glitter drest;
What from her lips fantastic Montfort caught,
And almost moved the thing the poet thought.
These scenes, the glory of a comic age,
(If decency could blanch each sullied page)
Peruse, admire, and give unto the stage;
Or thou, or beauteous Woffington, display
What Dryden's self, with pleasure, might survey.
Even he, before whose visionary eyes,
Melantha, robed in ever-varying dyes,
Gay fancy's work, appears, actor renowned,
Like Roscius, with theatric laurels crowned,
Cibber will smile applause, and think again
Of Harte, and Mohun, and all the female train,
Coxe, Marshal, Dryden's Reeve, Bet Slade, and Charles's reign.

Mrs. Montfort, who, by her second marriage, became Mrs. Verbruggen, was the first who appeared in the highly popular part of Melantha, and the action and character appear to have been held incomparable by that unquestionable judge of the humour of a coquette, or coxcomb, the illustrious Colley Cibber. "Melantha," says Cibber, "is as finished an impertinent as ever fluttered in a drawing-room; and seems to

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contain the most complete system of female foppery that could possibly be crowded into the tortured form of a fine lady. Her language, dress, motion, manners, soul, and body, are in a continual hurry to be something more than is necessary or commendable. And, though I doubt it will be a vain labour to offer you a just likeness of Mrs. Montfort's action, yet the fantastic expression is still so strong in my memory, that I cannot help saying something, though fantastically, about it. The first ridiculous airs, that break from her, are upon a gallant, never seen before, who delivers her a letter from her father, recommending him to her good graces as an honourable lover. Here, now, one would think she might naturally show a little of the sex's decent reserve, though never so slightly covered. No, sir, not a tittle of it: Modesty is a poor-souled country gentlewoman; she is too much a court lady to be under so vulgar a confusion. She reads the letter, therefore, with a careless dropping lip, and an erected brow, humming it hastily over, as if she were impatient to outgo her father's commands, by making a complete conquest of him at once; and that the letter might not embarrass the attack, crack! she crumbles it at once into her palm, and pours down upon him her whole artillery of airs, eyes, and motion; down goes her dainty diving body to the ground, as if she were sinking under the conscious load of her own attractions; then launches into a flood of fine language and compliment, still playing her chest forward in fifty falls and risings, like a swan upon waving water; and, to complete her impertinence, she is so rapidly fond of her own wit, that she will not give her lover leave to praise it. Silent assenting bows, and vain endeavours to speak, are all the share of the conversation he is admitted to, which, at last, he is removed from by her engagement to half a score of visits, which she swims from him to make, with a promise to return in a twinkling." *Cibber's Apology*, p. 99.

By this lively sketch, some judgment may be formed of the effect produced by the character of Melantha, when ably represented; but, to say the truth, we could hardly have drawn the same deduction from a simple perusal of the piece. Of the French phrases, which the affected lady throws into her conversation, some have been since naturalised, as *good graces*, *minuet*, *chagrin*, *grimace*, *ridicule*, and others. Little can be said of the tragic part of the drama. The sudden turn of fortune in the conclusion is ridiculed in "The Rehearsal."

The researches of Mr. Malone have ascertained that "Marriage à la Mode" was first acted in 1673, in an old theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, occupied by the King's com-

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pany, after that in Drury Lane had been burned, and during its re-building. The play was printed in the same year.

[Scott's general undervaluing of Dryden's comic pieces is very evident in this notice. I do not think that any one who has read the play will assign the success of Melantha's part entirely to Mrs. Montfort; and I do think that such a reader will see in that part the suggestion, however faint and rudimentary, of Congreve's immortal Millamant. Doralice, though she did not prove in the same way mother to a *filia pulchrior*, is even more attractive in herself. Her philosophy of flirtation (it can hardly be called love) in the last scene with Palamede is admirable, and it is perhaps worth pointing out that what Defoe somewhere calls "the vicious part" is avoided very skilfully, and much more by intention than by accident. As for the tragic scenes, there certainly is very little to be said for them. As before, commentators have endeavoured to assign chapter and verse for the different scenes of the play, but quite idly. The unfailing kindness of M. A. Beljame has enabled me to identify almost all the French songs quoted.—ED.]

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

EARL OF ROCHESTER.*

My Lord,

I humbly dedicate to your Lordship that poem, of which you were pleased to appear an early

* The patron, whom Dryden here addresses, was the famous John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, the wittiest, perhaps, and most dissolute, among the witty and dissolute courtiers of Charles II. It is somewhat remarkable, and may be considered as a just judgment upon the poet, that he was, a few years afterwards, waylaid and severely beaten by bravoes, whom Lord Rochester employed to revenge the share which Dryden is supposed to have had in the Essay on Satire. The reader is referred to the Life of the author for the particulars of this occurrence, which is here recalled to his recollection, as a striking illustration of the inutility, as well as meanness, of ill-applied praise; since even the eulogy of Dryden, however liberally bestowed and beautifully expressed, failed to save him from the most unmanly treatment at the hands of the worthless and heartless object on whom it was wasted. It is melancholy to see Dryden, as may be fairly inferred from his motto, piqueing himself on being admitted into the society of such men as Rochester, and enjoying their precarious favour. Mr. Malone has remarked,

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patron, before it was acted on the stage. I may yet go farther, with your permission, and say, that it received amendment from your noble hands ere it was fit to be presented. You may please likewise to remember, with how much favour to the author, and indulgence to the play, you commended it to the view of his Majesty, then at Windsor, and, by his approbation of it in writing, made way for its kind reception on the theatre. In this dedication, therefore, I may seem to imitate a custom of the ancients, who offered to their gods the firstlings of the flock (which, I think, they called *Ver sacrum*), because they helped them to increase. I am sure, if there be anything in this play, wherein I have raised myself beyond the ordinary lowness of my comedies, I ought wholly to acknowledge it to the favour of being admitted into your Lordship's conversation. And not only I, who pretend not to this way, but the best comic writers of our age, will join with me to acknowledge, that they have copied the gallantries of

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that even in the course of the year 1673, when this dedication came forth, Rochester entertained the perverse ambition of directing the public favour, not according to merit, but to his own caprice. Accordingly, he countenanced Settle in his impudent rivalry of Dryden, and wrote a prologue to the "Empress of Morocco," when it was exhibited at Whitehall. Perhaps, joined to a certain envy of Dryden's talents, the poet's intimacy with Sheffield Earl of Mulgrave gave offence to Rochester. It is certain they were never afterwards reconciled; and even after Rochester's death, Dryden only mentions his once valued patron, as "a man of quality whose ashes he will not disturb."—*Essay on the Origin and Progress of Satire*, prefixed to Juvenal. It would seem, however, that this dedication was very favourably received by Rochester, since a letter of Dryden's to that nobleman is still extant, in which he acknowledges a flattering return of compliment from his Lordship in exchange for it.

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courts, the delicacy of expression, and the decencies of behaviour, from your Lordship, with more success, than if they had taken their models from the court of France. But this, my Lord, will be no wonder to the world, which knows the excellency of your natural parts, and those you have acquired in a noble education. That which, with more reason, I admire, is, that being so absolute a courtier, you have not forgot either the ties of friendship, or the practice of generosity. In my little experience of a court (which, I confess, I desire not to improve), I have found in it much of interest, and more of detraction: Few men there have that assurance of a friend, as not to be made ridiculous by him when they are absent. There are a middling sort of courtiers, who become happy by their want of wit; but they supply that want by an excess of malice to those who have it. And there is no such persecution as that of fools: They can never be considerable enough to be talked of themselves; so that they are safe only in their obscurity, and grow mischievous to witty men, by the great diligence of their envy, and by being always present to represent and aggravate their faults. In the meantime, they are forced, when they endeavour to be pleasant, to live on the offals of their wit whom they decry; and either to quote it (which they do unwillingly), or to pass it upon others for their own. These are the men who make it their business to chase wit from the knowledge of princes, lest it should disgrace their ignorance. And this kind of malice your Lordship has not so much avoided, as surmounted. But if by the excellent temper of a royal master, always more ready to hear good than ill; if by his inclination

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to love you; if by your own merit and address; if by the charms of your conversation, the grace of your behaviour, your knowledge of greatness, and habitude in courts, you have been able to preserve yourself with honour in the midst of so dangerous a course; yet at least the remembrance of those hazards has inspired you with pity for other men, who, being of an inferior wit and quality to you, are yet persecuted, for being that in little, which your lordship is in great.* For the quarrel of those people extends itself to anything of sense; and if I may be so vain to own it, amongst the rest of the poets, has sometimes reached to the very borders of it, even to me. So that, if our general good fortune had not raised up your Lordship to defend us, I know not whether anything had been more ridiculous in court than writers. It is to your lordship's favour we generally owe our protection and patronage; and to the nobleness of your nature, which will not suffer the least shadow of your wit to be contemned in other men. You have been often pleased, not only to excuse my

* When this play was acted for the first time in 1673. But about 1675, Rochester contrived to give such offence as even the excellent temper of his royal master was unable to digest. This was by writing a lampoon called "The Insipids," in which the person and character of Charles are treated with most merciless and irreverent severity. It begins thus:—

Chaste, pious, prudent, Charles the Second,
The miracle of thy Restoration
May like to that of quails be reckoned,
Rained on the Israelitish nation;
The wished-for blessing, from heaven sent,
Became their curse and punishment.

For this satiric effusion the author was banished from the court.

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imperfections, but to vindicate what was tolerable in my writings from their censures; and, what I never can forget, you have not only been careful of my reputation, but of my fortune. You have been solicitous to supply my neglect of myself; and to overcome the fatal modesty of poets, which submits them to perpetual wants, rather than to become importunate with those people who have the liberality of kings in their disposing, and who, dishonouring the bounty of their master, suffer such to be in necessity who endeavour at least to please him; and for whose entertainment he has generously provided, if the fruits of his royal favour were not often stopped in other hands. But your Lordship has given me occasion, not to complain of courts whilst you are there. I have found the effects of your mediation in all my concernments; and they were so much the more noble in you, because they were wholly voluntary. I became your Lordship's (if I may venture on the similitude) as the world was made, without knowing him who made it; and brought only a passive obedience to be your creature. This nobleness of yours I think myself the rather obliged to own, because otherwise it must have been lost to all remembrance: For you are endued with that excellent quality of a frank nature, to forget the good which you have done.

But, my Lord, I ought to have considered, that you are as great a judge, as you are a patron; and that in praising you ill, I should incur a higher note of ingratitude, than that I thought to have avoided. I stand in need of all your accustomed goodness for the dedication of this play; which, though perhaps it be the best of my comedies, is yet so faulty, that I should have

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feared you for my critic, if I had not, with some policy, given you the trouble of being my protector. Wit seems to have lodged itself more nobly in this age, than in any of the former; and people of my mean condition are only writers, because some of the nobility, and your Lordship in the first place, are above the narrow praises which poesy could give you. But, let those who love to see themselves exceeded, encourage your Lordship in so dangerous a quality; for my own part, I must confess, that I have so much of self-interest, as to be content with reading some papers of your verses, without desiring you should proceed to a scene, or play; with the common prudence of those who are worsted in a duel, and declare they are satisfied, when they are first wounded. Your Lordship has but another step to make, and from the patron of wit, you may become its tyrant; and oppress our little reputations with more ease than you now protect them. But these, my Lord, are designs, which I am sure you harbour not, any more than the French king is contriving the conquest of the Swissers. It is a barren triumph, which is not worth your pains; and would only rank him amongst your slaves, who is already,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

And most faithful servant,

John Dryden.

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PROLOGUE.

Lord, how reformed and quiet are we grown,
Since all our braves and all our wits are gone!
Fop-corner now is free from civil war,
White-wig and vizard make * no longer jar.
France, and the fleet, have swept the town so clear
That we can act in peace, and you can hear.
† [Those that durst fight are gone to get renown,
And those that durst not, blush to stand in town.]
'Twas a sad sight, before they marched from home,
To see our warriors in red waistcoats come,
With hair tucked up, into our tiring-room.
But 'twas more sad to hear their last adieu:
The women sobbed, and swore they would be true;
And so they were, as long as e'er they could,
But powerful guinea cannot be withstood,
And they were made of playhouse flesh and blood.
Fate did their friends for double use ordain;
In wars abroad they grinning honour gain,
And mistresses, for all that stay, maintain.
Now they are gone, 'tis dead vacation here,
For neither friends nor enemies appear.
Poor pensive punk now peeps ere plays begin.
Sees the bare bench, and dares not venture in;
But manages her last half-crown with care,
And trudges to the Mall, on foot, for air.
Our city friends so far will hardly come,‡
They can take up with pleasures nearer home;
And see gay shows and gaudy scenes elsewhere;
For we presume they seldom come to hear.
But they have now ta'en up a glorious trade,
And cutting Morecraft § struts in masquerade.

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* [There is a various reading "mask," which is perhaps preferable.—Ed.]

† [This couplet appears in a contemporary version of the prologue printed in Covent Garden Drollery.—Ed.]

‡ ["Roam" in Covent Garden Drollery version.—Ed.]

§ In the conclusion of Beaumont and Fletcher's play of "The Scornful Lady," Morecraft, an usurer, turns a cutter, or, as we now say, a buck.

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There 's all our hope, for we shall show to-day
A masking ball, to recommend our play;
Nay, to endear them more, and let them see
We scorn to come behind in courtesy,
We 'll follow the new mode which they begin,
And treat them with a room, and couch within:
For that 's one way, howe'er the play fall short,
To oblige the town, the city, and the court.

Dryden seems to allude to Ravenscroft's play of "The Citizen turned Gentleman," a transmigration somewhat resembling that of cutting Morecraft. This play was now acting by the Duke's company in Dorset Gardens, which, from its situation, says Mr. Malone, was much frequented by citizens, as here insinuated.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

POLYDAMAS, *Usurper of Sicily.*
LEONIDAS, *the rightful Prince, unknown.*
ARGALEON, *favourite to* POLYDAMAS.
HERMOGENES, *foster-father to* LEONIDAS.
EUBULUS, *his friend and companion.*
RHODOPHIL, *captain of the guards.*
PALAMEDE, *a courtier.*

PALMYRA, *daughter to the Usurper.*
AMALTHEA, *sister to* ARGALEON.
DORALICE, *wife to* RHODOPHIL.
MELANTHA, *an affected lady.*
PHILOTIS, *woman to* MELANTHA.
BELIZA, *woman to* DORALICE.
ARTEMIS, *a court lady.*

SCENE—*Sicily.*

[Cast:—*Polydamas,* Wintershall; *Leonidas,* Kynaston; *Argaleon,* Lydall; *Hermogenes,* Cartwright; *Eubulus,* Watson; *Rhodophil,* Mohun; *Palamede,* Hart; *Palmyra,* Mrs. Coxe; *Amalthea,* Mrs. James; *Doralice,* Mrs. Marshall; *Melantha,* Mrs. Boutell; *Philotis,* Mrs. Reeve; *Beliza,* Mrs. Slade; *Artemis,* Mrs. Uphill.—ED.]

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MARRIAGE A LA MODE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Walks near the Court.*

Enter DORALICE *and* BELIZA.

Dor. Beliza, bring the lute into this arbour; the walks are empty: I would try the song the princess Amalthea bade me learn.

[*They go in, and sing.*

I.

Why should a foolish marriage vow,
Which long ago was made,
Oblige us to each other now,
When passion is decayed?
We loved, and we loved, as long as we could,
'Till our love was loved out in us both;
But our marriage is dead, when the pleasure is fled:
'Twas pleasure first made it an oath.

II.

If I have pleasures for a friend,
And further love in store,
What wrong has he, whose joys did end,
And who could give no more?

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'Tis a madness that he should be jealous of me,
Or that I should bar him of another:
For all we can gain, is to give ourselves pain,
When neither can hinder the other.

Enter PALAMEDE, *in riding habit, and hears the Song. Re-enter* DORALICE *and* BELIZA.

Bel. Madam, a stranger.

Dor. I did not think to have had witnesses of my bad singing.

Pala. If I have erred, madam, I hope you'll pardon the curiosity of a stranger; for I may well call myself so, after five years' absence from the court: but you have freed me from one error.

Dor. What's that, I beseech you?

Pala. I thought good voices, and ill faces, had been inseparable; and that to be fair, and sing well, had been only the privilege of angels.

Dor. And how many more of these fine things can you say to me?

Pala. Very few, madam; for if I should continue to see you some hours longer, you look so killingly, that I should be mute with wonder.

Dor. This will not give you the reputation of a wit with me. You travelling monsieurs live upon the stock you have got abroad, for the first day or two: to repeat with a good memory, and apply with a good grace, is all your wit; and, commonly, your gullets are sewed up, like cormorants. When you have regorged what you have taken in, you are the leanest things in nature.

Pala. Then, madam, I think you had best make that use of me; let me wait on you for two or three days together, and you shall hear all I have learnt of extraordinary in other countries; and one thing which I never saw 'till I

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came home, that is, a lady of a better voice, better face, and better wit, than any I have seen abroad. And, after this, if I should not declare myself most passionately in love with you, I should have less wit than yet you think I have.

Dor. A very plain, and pithy declaration. I see, sir, you have been travelling in Spain or Italy, or some of the hot countries, where men come to the point immediately. But are you sure these are not words of course? For I would not give my poor heart an occasion of complaint against me, that I engaged it too rashly, and then could not bring it off.

Pala. Your heart may trust itself with me safely; I shall use it very civilly while it stays, and never turn it away, without fair warning to provide for itself.

Dor. First, then, I do receive your passion with as little consideration, on my part, as ever you gave it me, on yours. And now, see what a miserable wretch you have made yourself!

Pala. Who, I miserable? Thank you for that. Give me love enough, and life enough, and I defy Fortune.

Dor. Know, then, thou man of vain imagination, know, to thy utter confusion, that I am virtuous.

Pala. Such another word, and I give up the ghost.

Dor. Then, to strike you quite dead, know that I am married too.

Pala. Art thou married? O thou damnable virtuous woman!

Dor. Yes, married to a gentleman; young, handsome, rich, valiant, and with all the good qualities that will make you despair, and hang yourself.

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Pala. Well, in spite of all that, I 'll love you: Fortune has cut us out for one another; for I am to be married within these three days; married, past redemption, to a young, fair, rich, and virtuous lady; and it shall go hard but I will love my wife as little, as, I perceive, you do your husband.

Dor. Remember, I invade no propriety: my servant you are, only 'till you are married.

Pala. In the meantime, you are to forget you have a husband.

Dor. And you, that you are to have a wife.

Bel. [*aside, to her Lady.*] O madam, my lord's just at the end of the walks! and, if you make not haste, will discover you.

Dor. Some other time, new servant, we 'll talk further of the premisses; in the meanwhile, break not my first commandment, that is, not to follow me.

Pala. But where, then, shall I find you again?

Dor. At court. Yours, for two days, sir.

Pala. And nights, I beseech you, madam.

[*Exeunt* DORALICE *and* BELIZ.

Pala. Well, I 'll say that for thee, thou art a very dexterous executioner; thou hast done my business at one stroke: yet I must marry another —and yet I must love this; and if it lead me into some little inconveniencies, as jealousies, and duels, and death, and so forth—yet, while sweet love is in the case, Fortune, do thy worst, and avaunt, mortality!

Enter RHODOPHIL, *who seems speaking to one within.*

Rho. Leave 'em with my lieutenant, while I fetch new orders from the king.—How? Palamede! [*Sees* PALAMEDE.

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Pala. Rhodophil!

Rho. Who thought to have seen you in Sicily?

Pala. Who thought to have found the court so far from Syracuse?

Rho. The king best knows the reason of the progress. But, answer me, I beseech you, what brought you home from travel?

Pala. The commands of an old rich father.

Rho. And the hopes of burying him?

Pala. Both together, as you see, have prevailed on my good-nature. In few words, my old man has already married me; for he has agreed with another old man, as rich and as covetous as himself; the articles are drawn, and I have given my consent, for fear of being disinherited; and yet know not what kind of woman I am to marry,

Rho. Sure your father intends you some very ugly wife, and has a mind to keep you in ignorance till you have shot the gulf.

Pala. I know not that; but obey I will, and must.

Rho. Then I cannot choose but grieve for all the good girls and courtesans of France and Italy. They have lost the most kind-hearted, doting, prodigal humble servant, in Europe.

Pala. All I could do, in these three years I stayed behind you, was to comfort the poor creatures for the loss of you. But what's the reason that, in all this time, a friend could never hear from you?

Rho. Alas, dear Palamede! I have had no joy to write, nor indeed to do anything in the world to please me. The greatest misfortune imaginable is fallen upon me.

Pala. Pr'ythee, what's the matter?

Rho. In one word, I am married: wretchedly

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married; and have been above these two years. Yes, faith, the devil has had power over me, in spite of my vows and resolutions to the contrary.

Pala. I find you have sold yourself for filthy lucre; she 's old, or ill conditioned.

Rho. No; none of these: I 'm sure she 's young; and, for her humour, she laughs, sings, and dances eternally; and, which is more, we never quarrel about it, for I do the same.

Pala. You 're very unfortunate indeed: then the case is plain, she is not handsome.

Rho. A great beauty too, as people say.

Pala. As people say? why, you should know that best yourself.

Rho. Ask those, who have smelt to a strong perfume two years together, what 's the scent.

Pala. But here are good qualities enough for one woman.

Rho. Ay, too many, Palamede. If I could put them into three or four women, I should be content.

Pala. O, now I have found it! you dislike her for no other reason but because she 's your wife.

Rho. And is not that enough? All that I know of her perfections now, is only by memory. I remember, indeed, that about two years ago I loved her passionately; but those golden days are gone, Palamede: Yet I loved her a whole half year, double the natural term of any mistress; and I think, in my conscience, I could have held out another quarter, but then the world began to laugh at me, and a certain shame, of being out of fashion, seized me. At last, we arrived at that point, that there was nothing left in us to make us new to one another. Yet still I set a good face upon the matter, and am infinite

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fond of her before company; but when we are alone, we walk like lions in a room; she one way, and I another. And we lie with our backs to each other, so far distant, as if the fashion of great beds was only invented to keep husband and wife sufficiently asunder.

Pala. The truth is, your disease is very desperate; but, though you cannot be cured, you may be patched up a little: you must get you a mistress, Rhodophil. That, indeed, is living upon cordials; but, as fast as one fails, you must supply it with another. You 're like a gamester who has lost his estate; yet, in doing that, you have learned the advantages of play, and can arrive to live upon 't.

Rho. Truth is, I have been thinking on 't, and have just resolved to take your counsel; and, faith, considering the damned disadvantages of a married man, I have provided well enough, for a poor humble sinner, that is not ambitious of great matters.

Pala. What is she, for a woman?

Rho. One of the stars of Syracuse, I assure you: Young enough, fair enough; and, but for one quality, just such a woman as I could wish.

Pala. O friend, this is not an age to be critical in beauty. When we had good store of handsome women, and but few chapmen, you might have been more curious in your choice; but now the price is enhanced upon us, and all mankind set up for mistresses, so that poor little creatures, without beauty, birth, or breeding, but only impudence, go off at unreasonable rates: And a man, in these hard times, snaps at them, as he does at broad gold; never examines the weight, but takes light or heavy, as he can get it.

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Rho. But my mistress has one fault, that's almost unpardonable; for, being a town-lady, without any relation to the court, yet she thinks herself undone if she be not seen there three or four times a day with the princess Amalthea. And, for the king, she haunts and watches him so narrowly in a morning, that she prevents even the chemists, who beset his chamber, to turn their mercury into his gold.

Pala. Yet, hitherto, methinks, you are no very unhappy man.

Rho. With all this, she's the greatest gossip in nature; for, besides the court, she's the most eternal visitor of the town; and yet manages her time so well, that she seems ubiquitary.* For my part, I can compare her to nothing but the sun; for, like him, she takes no rest, nor ever sets in one place, but to rise in another.

Pala. I confess, she had need be handsome, with these qualities.

Rho. No lady can be so curious of a new fashion, as she is of a new French word: she's the very mint of the nation; and as fast as any bullion comes out of France, coins it immediately into our language.

Pala. And her name is——

Rho. No naming; that's not like a cavalier: Find her, if you can, by my description; and I am not so ill a painter that I need write the name beneath the picture.

Pala. Well, then, how far have you proceeded in your love?

Rho. 'Tis yet in the bud, and what fruit it may bear I cannot tell; for this insufferable humour, of haunting the court, is so predominant,

* [Earlier generally than "ubiquitous."—Ed.]

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that she has hitherto broken all her assignations with me, for fear of missing her visits there.

Pala. That 's the hardest part of your adventure. But, for aught I see, fortune has used us both alike: I have a strange kind of mistress too in court, besides her I am to marry.

Rho. You have made haste to be in love then; for, if I am not mistaken, you are but this day arrived.

Pala. That 's all one: I have seen the lady already, who has charmed me; seen her in these walks, courted her, and received, for the first time, an answer that does not put me into despair.

To them ARGALEON, AMALTHEA, *and* ARTEMIS.

I 'll tell you at more leisure my adventures. The walks fill apace, I see. Stay, is not that the young lord Argaleon, the king's favourite?

Rho. Yes, and as proud as ever, as ambitious, and as revengeful.

Pala. How keeps he the king's favour with these qualities?

Rho. Argaleon's father helped him to the crown: besides, he gilds over all his vices to the king, and, standing in the dark to him, sees all his inclinations, interests, and humours, which he so times and soothes, that, in effect, he reigns.

Pala. His sister Amalthea, who, I guess, stands by him, seems not to be of his temper.

Rho. O, she 's all goodness and generosity.

Arga. Rhodophil, the king expects you earnestly.

Rho. 'Tis done, my lord, what he commanded: I only waited his return from hunting. Shall I attend your lordship to him?

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Arga. No; I go first another way.
[*Exit hastily.*

Pala. He seems in haste, and discomposed.

Amal. [*to* RHOD. *after a short whisper.*] Your friend? then he must needs be of much merit.

Rho. When he has kissed the king's hand, I know he 'll beg the honour to kiss yours. Come, Palamede.

[*Exeunt* RHODO. *and* PALA. *bowing to* AMAL.

Arte. Madam, you tell me most surprising news.

Amal. The fear of it, you see,
Has discomposed my brother; but to me,
All, that can bring my country good, is welcome.

Arte. It seems incredible, that this old king,
Whom all the world thought childless,
Should come to search the farthest parts of Sicily,
In hope to find an heir.

Amal. To lessen your astonishment, I will
Unfold some private passages of state,
Of which you are yet ignorant: Know, first,
That this Polydamas, who reigns, unjustly
Gained the crown.

Arte. Somewhat of this I have confusedly heard.

Amal. I 'll tell you all in brief: Theagenes,
Our last great king,
Had, by his queen, one only son, an infant
Of three years old, called, after him, Theagenes.
The general, this Polydamas, then married;
The public feasts for which were scarcely past,
When a rebellion in the heart of Sicily
Called out the king to arms.

Arte. Polydamas
Had then a just excuse to stay behind.

Amal. His temper was too warlike to accept it.

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He left his bride, and the new joys of marriage,
And followed to the field. In short, they fought,
The rebels were o'ercome; but in the fight
The too bold king received a mortal wound.
When he perceived his end approaching near,
He called the general, to whose care he left
His widow queen, and orphan son; then died.
Arte. Then false Polydamas betrayed his trust?
Amal. He did; and with my father's help,—
for which
Heaven pardon him!—so gained the soldiers'
hearts,
That, in a few days, he was saluted king:
And when his crimes had impudence enough
To bear the eye of day,
He marched his army back to Syracuse.
But see how heaven can punish wicked men,
In granting their desires: The news was brought
him,
That day he was to enter it, that Eubulus,
Whom his dead master had left governor,
Was fled, and with him bore away the queen,
And royal orphan; but, what more amazed him,
His wife, now big with child, and much detesting
Her husband's practices, had willingly
Accompanied their flight.
Arte. How I admire her virtue!
Amal. What became
Of her, and them, since that, was never known;
Only, some few days since, a famous robber
Was taken with some jewels of vast price,
Which, when they were delivered to the king,
He knew had been his wife's; with these, a letter,
Much torn and sullied, but which yet he knew
To be her writing.
Arte. Sure, from hence he learned
He had a son?

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Amal. It was not left so plain:
The paper only said, she died in child-bed;
But when it should have mentioned son or daughter,
Just there it was torn off.
Arte. Madam, the king.

To them POLYDAMAS, ARGALEON, *Guard and Attendants.*

Arga. The robber, though thrice racked, confessed no more,
But that he took those jewels near this place.
Poly. But yet the circumstances strongly argue,
That those, for whom I search, are not far off.
Arga. I cannot easily believe it.
Arte. No,
You would not have it so. [*Aside.*
Poly. Those, I employed, have in the neighbouring hamlet,
Amongst the fishers' cabins, made discovery
Of some young persons, whose uncommon beauty,
And graceful carriage, make it seem suspicious
They are not what they seem: I therefore sent
The captain of my guards, this morning early,
With orders to secure and bring them to me.

Enter RHODOPHIL *and* PALAMEDE.

O, here he is.—Have you performed my will?
Rho. Sir, those, whom you commanded me to bring,
Are waiting in the walks.
Poly. Conduct them hither.
Rho. First, give me leave
To beg your notice of this gentleman.
Poly. He seems to merit it. His name and quality?

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Rho. Palamede, son to lord Cleodemus of Palermo,
And new returned from travel.

[PALAMEDE *approaches, and kneels to kiss the King's hand.*

Poly. You are welcome.
I knew your father well, he was both brave
And honest; we two once were fellow-soldiers
In the last civil wars.

Pala. I bring the same unquestion'd honesty
And zeal to serve your majesty; the courage
You were pleased to praise in him,
Your royal prudence, and your people's love,
Will never give me leave to try, like him,
In civil wars; I hope it may in foreign.

Poly. Attend the court, and it shall be my care
To find out some employment, worthy you.
Go, Rhodophil, and bring in those without.

[*Exeunt* RHO. *and* PALA.

RHODOPHIL *returns again immediately, and with him enter* HERMOGENES, LEONIDAS, *and* PALMYRA.

Behold two miracles!

[*Looking earnestly on* LEON. *and* PALMYRA.

Of different sexes, but of equal form:
So matchless both, that my divided soul
Can scarcely ask the gods a son or daughter,
For fear of losing one. If from your hands,
You powers, I shall this day receive a daughter,
Argaleon, she is yours; but if a son,
Then Amalthea's love shall make him happy.

Arga. Grant, heaven, this admirable nymph may prove
That issue, which he seeks!

Amal. Venus Urania, if thou art a goddess,

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Grant that sweet youth may prove the prince of Sicily!

Poly. Tell me, old man, and tell me true, from whence [*To* HERM.

Had you that youth and maid?

Her. From whence you had

Your sceptre, sir: I had them from the gods.

Poly. The gods then have not such another gift.

Say who their parents were.

Her. My wife, and I.

Arga. It is not likely, a virgin, of so excellent a beauty,

Should come from such a stock.

Amal. Much less, that such a youth, so sweet, so graceful,

Should be produced from peasants.

Her. Why, nature is the same in villages,

And much more fit to form a noble issue,

Where it is least corrupted.

Poly. He talks too like a man that knew the world,

To have been long a peasant. But the rack

Will teach him other language. Hence with him!

[*As the Guards are carrying him away, his peruke falls off.*

Sure I have seen that face before. Hermogenes!

'Tis he, 'tis he, who fled away with Eubulus,

And with my dear Eudoxia?

Her. Yes, sir, I am Hermogenes!

And if to have been loyal be a crime,

I stand prepared to suffer.

Poly. If thou wouldst live, speak quickly,

What is become of my Eudoxia?

Where is the queen and young Theagenes?

Where Eubulus: and which of these is mine?

[*Pointing to* LEON. *and* PALM.

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Her. Eudoxia is dead, so is the queen,
The infant king, her son, and Eubulus.
Poly. Traitor, 'tis false: Produce them, or——
Her. Once more
I tell you, they are dead; but leave to threaten,
For you shall know no further.
Poly. Then prove indulgent to my hopes, and be
My friend for ever. Tell me, good Hermogenes,
Whose son is that brave youth?
Her. Sir, he is yours.
Poly. Fool that I am! thou see'st that so I wish it,
And so thou flatter'st me.
Her. By all that 's holy!
Poly. Again. Thou canst not swear too deeply.—
Yet hold, I will believe thee:—Yet I doubt.
Her. You need not, sir.
Arga. Believe him not; he sees you credulous,
And would impose his own base issue on you,
And fix it to your crown.
Amal. Behold his goodly shape and feature, sir;
Methinks he much resembles you.
Arga. I say, if you have any issue here,
It must be that fair creature;
By all my hopes I think so.
Amal. Yes, brother, I believe you by your hopes,
For they are all for her.
Poly. Call the youth nearer.
Her. Leonidas, the king would speak with you.
Poly. Come near, and be not dazzled with the splendour,
And greatness of a court.
Leon. I need not this encouragement;
I can fear nothing but the gods.

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And, for this glory, after I have seen
The canopy of state spread wide above
In the abyss of heaven, the court of stars,
The blushing morning, and the rising sun,
What greater can I see?

Poly. This speaks thee born a prince; thou art, thyself, [*Embracing him.*

That rising sun, and shalt not see, on earth,
A brighter than thyself. All of you witness,
That for my son I here receive this youth,
This brave, this——but I must not praise him further,
Because he now is mine.

Leon. I wonnot, sir, believe [*Kneeling.*
That I am made your sport;
For I find nothing in myself, but what
Is much above a scorn. I dare give credit
To whatsoe'er a king, like you, can tell me.
Either I am, or will deserve to be, your son.

Arga. I yet maintain it is impossible
This young man should be yours; for, if he were,
Why should Hermogenes so long conceal him,
When he might gain so much by his discovery?

Her. I stayed a while to make him worthy, sir,
Of you. [*To the King.*
But in that time I found
Somewhat within him, which so moved my love,
I never could resolve to part with him.

Leon. You ask too many questions, and are [*To* ARGA.
Too saucy for a subject.

Arga. You rather over-act your part, and are
Too soon a prince.

Leon. Too soon you 'll find me one.

Poly. Enough, Argaleon!
I have declared him mine; and you, Leonidas,
Live well with him I love.

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Arga. Sir, if he be your son, I may have leave
To think your queen had twins. Look on this virgin;
Hermogenes would enviously deprive you
Of half your treasure.
Her. Sir, she is my daughter.
I could, perhaps, thus aided by this lord,
Prefer her to be yours; but truth forbid
I should procure her greatness by a lie!
Poly. Come hither, beauteous maid: Are you not sorry
Your father will not let you pass for mine?
Palm. I am content to be what heaven has made me.
Poly. Could you not wish yourself a princess then?
Palm. Not to be sister to Leonidas.
Poly. Why, my sweet maid?
Palm. Indeed I cannot tell;
But I could be content to be his handmaid.
Arga. I wish I had not seen her. [*Aside.*
Palm. I must weep for your good fortune; [*To* LEON.
Pray, pardon me, indeed I cannot help it.
Leonidas,—alas! I had forgot,
Now I must call you prince,—but must I leave you?
Leon. I dare not speak to her; for, if I should,
I must weep too. [*Aside.*
Poly. No, you shall live at court, sweet innocence,
And see him there. Hermogenes,
Though you intended not to make me happy,
Yet you shall be rewarded for the event.
Come, my Leonidas, let's thank the gods;
Thou for a father, I for such a son.
[*Exeunt all but* LEON. *and* PALM.

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Leon. My dear Palmyra, many eyes observe me,
And I have thoughts so tender, that I cannot
In public speak them to you: Some hours hence,
I shall shake off these crowds of fawning courtiers,
And then—— [*Exit* LEON.

Palm. Fly swift, you hours! you measure time for me in vain,
Till you bring back Leonidas again.
Be shorter now; and, to redeem that wrong,
When he and I are met, be twice as long!
[*Exit.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter MELANTHA *and* PHILOTIS.

Phil. Count Rhodophil's a fine gentleman indeed, madam; and, I think, deserves your affection.

Mel. Let me die but he's a fine man; he sings and dances *en Français*, and writes the *billets-doux* to a miracle.

Phil. And those are no small talents, to a lady that understands, and values the French air, as your ladyship does.

Mel. How charming is the French air, and what an *étourdi bête* is one of our untravelled islanders! When he would make his court to me, let me die but he is just Æsop's ass, that would imitate the courtly French in his addresses; but, instead of those, comes pawing upon me, and doing all things so *maladroitly*.

Phil. 'Tis great pity Rhodophil's a married man, that you may not have an honourable intrigue with him.

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Mel. Intrigue, Philotis! that's an old phrase; I have laid that word by; amour sounds better. But thou art heir to all my cast words, as thou art to my old wardrobe. Oh, Count Rhodophil! Ah *mon cher!* I could live and die with him.

Enter PALAMEDE, *and a Servant.*

Serv. Sir, this is my lady.

Pala. Then this is she that is to be divine, and nymph, and goddess, and with whom I am to be desperately in love. [*Bows to her, delivering a letter.*] This letter, madam, which I present you from your father, has given me both the happy opportunity, and the boldness, to kiss the fairest hands in Sicily.

Mel. Came you lately from Palermo, sir?

Pala. But yesterday, madam.

Mel. [Reading the letter.] *Daughter, receive the bearer of this letter, as a gentleman whom I have chosen to make you happy.* [O Venus, a new servant sent me! and let me die but he has the air of a *galant homme!*] *His father is the rich lord Cleodemus, our neighbour: I suppose you'll find nothing disagreeable in his person or his converse; both which he has improved by travel. The treaty is already concluded, and I shall be in town within these three days; so that you have nothing to do but to obey your careful father.*

[*To* PALA.] Sir, my father, for whom I have a blind obedience, has commanded me to receive your passionate addresses; but you must also give me leave to avow, that I cannot merit them from so accomplished a cavalier.

Pala. I want many things, madam, to render me accomplished; and the first and greatest of them is your favour.

Mel. Let me die, Philotis, but this is extremely

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French; but yet Count Rhodophil—a gentleman, sir, that understands the *grand monde* so well, who has haunted the best conversations, and who, in short, has voyaged, may pretend to the good graces of a lady.

Pala. [*Aside.*] Hey-day! *Grand monde! Conversation! voyaged!* and *good graces!* I find my mistress is one of those that run mad in new French words.

Mel. I suppose, sir, you have made the tour of France; and, having seen all that's fine there, will make a considerable reformation in the rudeness of our court: For let me die, but an unfashioned, untravelled, mere Sicilian, is a *bête;* and has nothing in the world of an *honnête homme.*

Pala. I must confess, madam, that——

Mel. And what new minuets have you brought over with you? their minuets are to a miracle! and our Sicilian jigs are so dull and sad to them!

Pala. For minuets, madam——

Mel. And what new plays are there in vogue? And who danced best in the last grand ballet? Come, sweet servant, you shall tell me all.

Pala. [*aside.*] Tell her all? Why, she asks all, and will hear nothing.—To answer in order, madam, to your demands——

Mel. I am thinking what a happy couple we shall be! For you shall keep up your correspondence abroad, and everything that's new writ, in France, and fine, I mean all that's delicate, and *bien tourné,* we will have first.

Pala. But, madam, our fortune——

Mel. I understand you, sir; you'll leave that to me: For the *ménage* of a family, I know it better than any lady in Sicily.

Pala. Alas, madam, we——

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Mel. Then, we will never make visits together, nor see a play, but always apart; you shall be every day at the king's levee, and I at the queen's; and we will never meet, but in the drawing-room.

Phil. Madam, the new prince is just passed by the end of the walk.

Mel. The new prince, sayest thou? Adieu, dear servant; I have not made my court to him these two long hours. O, it is the sweetest prince! so *obligeant, charmant, ravissant*, that ——Well, I 'll make haste to kiss his hands, and then make half a score visits more, and be with you again in a twinkling.

[*Exit running, with* PHIL.

Pala. [*solus.*] Now heaven, of thy mercy, bless me from this tongue! it may keep the field against a whole army of lawyers, and that in their own language, French gibberish.* It is true, in the daytime, it is tolerable, when a man has field-room to run from it; but to be shut up in a bed with her, like two cocks in a pit, humanity cannot support it. I must kiss all night in my own defence, and hold her down, like a boy at cuffs, and give her the rising blow every time she begins to speak.

Enter RHODOPHIL.

But here comes Rhodophil. It is pretty odd that my mistress should so much resemble his: The same newsmonger, the same passionate lover of a court, the same——But, Basta,† since I

* [It may be well to remind the reader that "French gibberish," compounded of English, Latin, and French, kept its place in English law, especially in reports, till the beginning of the eighteenth century.—ED.]

† ["Enough," *Ital.*—ED.]

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must marry her. I 'll say nothing, because he shall not laugh at my misfortune.

Rho. Well, Palamede, how go the affairs of love? You have seen your mistress?

Pala. I have so.

Rho. And how, and how? has the old Cupid, your father, chosen well for you? is he a good woodman?

Pala. She 's much handsomer than I could have imagined: In short, I love her, and will marry her.

Rho. Then you are quite off from your other mistress?

Pala. You are mistaken; I intend to love them both, as a reasonable man ought to do: For, since all women have their faults and imperfections, it is fit that one of them should help out the other.

Rho. This were a blessed doctrine, indeed, if our wives would hear it; but they are their own enemies: If they would suffer us but now and then to make excursions, the benefit of our variety would be theirs; instead of one continued, lazy, tired love, they would, in their turns, have twenty vigorous, fresh, and active lovers.

Pala. And I would ask any of them, whether a poor narrow brook, half dry the best part of the year, and running ever one way, be to be compared to a lusty stream, that has ebbs and flows?

Rho. Ay, or is half so profitable for navigation?

Enter DORALICE, *walking by, and reading.*

Pala. Ods my life, Rhodophil, will you keep my counsel?

Rho. Yes: Where 's the secret?

Pala. There it is: [*Shewing* DOR.] I may tell

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you, as my friend, *sub sigillo*, etc., this is that very numerical * lady, with whom I am in love.

Rho. By all that 's virtuous, my wife! [*Aside.*

Pala. You look strangely: How do you like her? Is she not very handsome?

Rho. Sure he abuses me. [*Aside.*]—Why the devil do you ask my judgment?

Pala. You are so dogged now, you think no man's mistress handsome but your own. Come, you shall hear her talk too; she has wit, I assure you.

Rho. This is too much, Palamede. [*Going back.*

Pala. Pr'ythee do not hang back so: Of an old tried lover, thou art the most bashful fellow! [*Pulling him forward.*

Dor. Were you so near, and would not speak, dear husband? [*Looking up.*

Pala. Husband, quoth a! I have cut out a fine piece of work for myself. [*Aside.*

Rho. Pray, spouse, how long have you been acquainted with this gentleman?

Dor. Who? I acquainted with this stranger? To my best knowledge, I never saw him before.

Enter MELANTHA *at the other end.*

Pala. Thanks, fortune, thou hast helped me. [*Aside.*

Rho. Palamede, this must not pass so. I must know your mistress a little better.

Pala. It shall be your own fault else. Come, I 'll introduce you.

Rho. Introduce me! where?

Pala. There. To my mistress.

[*Pointing to* MELANTHA, *who swiftly passes over the stage.*

* [In 17th century = "identical." Scott omits it.—ED.]

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Rho. Who? Melantha! O heavens, I did not see her.

Pala. But I did: I am an eagle where I love; I have seen her this half hour.

Dor. [*Aside.*] I find he has wit, he has got off so readily; but it would anger me, if he should love Melantha.

Rho. [*Aside.*] Now, I could even wish it were my wife he loved; I find he 's to be married to my mistress.

Pala. Shall I run after, and fetch her back again, to present you to her?

Rho. No, you need not; I have the honour to have some small acquaintance with her.

Pala. [*Aside.*] O Jupiter! what a blockhead was I, not to find it out! my wife, that must be, is his mistress. I did a little suspect it before. Well, I must marry her, because she 's handsome, and because I hate to be disinherited for a younger brother, which I am sure I shall be, if I disobey; and yet I must keep in with Rhodophil, because I love his wife.—[*To* RHO.] I must desire you to make my excuse to your lady, if I have been so unfortunate to cause any mistake; and, withal, to beg the honour of being known to her.

Rho. O, that is but reason.—Hark you, spouse, pray look upon this gentleman as my friend; whom, to my knowledge, you have never seen before this hour.

Dor. I am so obedient a wife, sir, that my husband's commands shall ever be a law to me.

Enter MELANTHA *again, hastily, and runs to embrace* DORALICE.

Mel. O, my dear, I was just going to pay my devoirs to you; I had not time this morning.

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for making my court to the king, and our new prince. Well, never nation was so happy, and all that, in a young prince; and he is the kindest person in the world to me, let me die if he is not.

Dor. He has been bred up far from court, and therefore——

Mel. That imports not: Though he has not seen the *grand monde*, and all that, let me die but he has the air of the court most absolutely.

Pala. But yet, madam, he——

Mel. O, servant, you can testify that I am in his good graces. Well, I cannot stay long with you, because I have promised him this afternoon to——But hark you, my dear, I'll tell you a secret. [*Whispers to* DOR.

Rho. The devil's in me, that I must love this woman. [*Aside.*

Pala. The devil's in me, that I must marry this woman. [*Aside.*

Mel. [*Raising her voice.*] So the prince and I —But you must make a secret of this, my dear; for I would not for the world your husband should hear it, or my tyrant, there, that must be.

Pala. Well, fair impertinent, your whisper is not lost, we hear you. [*Aside*

Dor. I understand then that——

Mel. I'll tell you, my dear, the prince took me by the hand, and pressed it *à la dérobée*, because the king was near, made the *doux yeux* to me, and, *ensuite*, said a thousand gallantries, or let me die, my dear.

Dor. Then I am sure you——

Mel. You are mistaken, my dear.

Dor. What, before I speak?

Mel. But I know your meaning. You think, my dear, that I assumed something of *fierté* into

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my countenance, to *rebute* him; but, quite contrary, I regarded him,—I know not how to express it in our dull Sicilian language,—*d'un air enjoué;* and said nothing but *à d'autres, à d'autres,* and that it was all *grimace,* and would not pass upon me.

Enter ARTEMIS: MELANTHA *sees her, and runs away from* DORALICE.

[*To* ARTEMIS.] My dear, I must beg your pardon, I was just making a loose from Doralice, to pay my respects to you. Let me die, if I ever pass time so agreeably as in your company, and if I would leave it for any lady's in Sicily.

Arte. The princess Amalthea is coming this way.

Enter AMALTHEA: MELANTHA *runs to her.*

Mel. O, dear madam! I have been at your lodging, in my new *calèche,* so often, to tell you of a new amour, betwixt two persons whom you would little suspect for it, that, let me die if one of my coach-horses be not dead, and another quite tired, and sunk under the fatigue.

Amal. O, Melantha, I can tell you news; the prince is coming this way.

Mel. The prince? O sweet prince! He and I are to—and I forgot it.—Your pardon, sweet madam, for my abruptness.—Adieu, my dears.—Servant, Rhodophil.—Servant, servant, servant all. [*Exit running.*

Amal. Rhodophil, a word with you. [*Whispers.*

Dor. [*To* PALA.] Why do you not follow your mistress, sir?

Pala. Follow her? Why, at this rate she 'll be at the Indies within this half hour.

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Dor. However, if you cannot follow her all day, you will meet her at night, I hope?

Pala. But can you, in charity, suffer me to be so mortified, without affording me some relief? If it be but to punish that sign of a husband there, that lazy matrimony, that dull insipid taste, who leaves such delicious fare at home, to dine abroad on worse meat, and pay dear for it into the bargain.

Dor. All this is in vain: Assure yourself, I will never admit of any visit from you in private.

Pala. That is to tell me, in other words, my condition is desperate.

Dor. I think you in so ill a condition, that I am resolved to pray for you, this very evening, in the close walk behind the terrace; for that's a private place, and there I am sure nobody will disturb my devotions. And so, good-night, sir. [*Exit.*

Pala. This is the newest way of making an appointment I ever heard of. Let women alone to contrive the means; I find we are but dunces to them. Well, I will not be so profane a wretch as to interrupt her devotions; but, to make them more effectual, I 'll down upon my knees, and endeavour to join my own with them. [*Exit.*

Amal. [*To* RHO.] I know already they do not love each other; and that my brother acts but a forced obedience to the king's commands; so that if a quarrel should arise betwixt the prince and him, I were most miserable on both sides.

Rho. There shall be nothing wanting in me, madam, to prevent so sad a consequence.

Enter the King and LEONIDAS; *the King whispers* AMALTHEA.

[*To himself.*] I begin to hate this Palamede,

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because he is to marry my mistress: Yet break with him I dare not, for fear of being quite excluded from her company. It is a hard case, when a man must go by his rival to his mistress: But it is, at worst, but using him like a pair of heavy boots in a dirty journey; after I have fouled him all day, I 'll throw him off at night.

[*Exit.*

Amal. [*To the King.*] This honour is too great for me to hope.

Poly. You shall this hour have the assurance of it.—

Leonidas, come hither; you have heard,
I doubt not, that the father of this princess
Was my most faithful friend, while I was yet
A private man; and when I did assume
This crown, he served me in the high attempt.
You see, then, to what gratitude obliges me;
Make your addresses to her.

Leon. Sir, I am yet too young to be a courtier;
I should too much betray my ignorance,
And want of breeding to so fair a lady.

Amal. Your language speaks you not bred up in deserts,
But in the softness of some Asian court,
Where luxury and ease invent kind words,
To cozen tender virgins of their hearts.

Poly. You need not doubt,
But in what words soe'er a prince can offer
His crown and person, they will be received.
You know my pleasure, and you know your duty.

Leon. Yes, sir, I shall obey, in what I can.

Poly. In what you can, Leonidas? Consider,
He 's both your king, and father, who commands you.
Besides, what is there hard in my injunction?

Leon. 'Tis hard to have my inclination forced.

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I would not marry, sir; and, when I do,
I hope you 'll give me freedom in my choice.
Poly. View well this lady,
Whose mind as much transcends her beauteous face,
As that excels all others.
Amal. My beauty, as it ne'er could merit love,
So neither can it beg: And, sir, you may
Believe, that what the king has offered you,
I should refuse, did I not value more
Your person than your crown.
Leon. Think it not pride,
Or my new fortunes swell me to contemn you;
Think less, that I want eyes to see your beauty;
And, least of all, think duty wanting in me
To obey a father's will: But——
Poly. But what, Leonidas?
For I must know your reason; and be sure
It be convincing too.
Leon. Sir, ask the stars,
Which have imposed love on us, like a fate,
Why minds are bent to one, and fly another?
Ask, why all beauties cannot move all hearts?
For though there may
Be made a rule for colour, or for feature,
There can be none for liking.
Poly. Leonidas, you owe me more
Than to oppose your liking to my pleasure.
Leon. I owe you all things, sir; but something, too,
I owe myself.
Poly. You shall dispute no more; I am a king,
And I will be obeyed.
Leon. You are a king, sir, but you are no god;
Or, if you were, you could not force my will.
Poly. [*Aside.*] But you are just, you gods; O, you are just,

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In punishing the crimes of my rebellion
With a rebellious son!
Yet I can punish him, as you do me.—
Leonidas, there is no jesting with
My will: I ne'er had done so much to gain
A crown, but to be absolute in all things.

Amal. O, sir, be not so much a king, as to
Forget you are a father: Soft indulgence
Becomes that name. Tho' nature gives you power
To bind his duty, 'tis with silken bonds:
Command him, then, as you command yourself;
He is as much a part of you, as are
Your appetite and will, and those you force not,
But gently bend, and make them pliant to your reason.

Poly. It may be I have used too rough a way.—
Forgive me, my Leonidas; I know
I lie as open to the gusts of passion,
As the bare shore to every beating surge:
I will not force thee now; but I entreat thee,
Absolve a father's vow to this fair virgin;
A vow, which hopes of having such a son
First caused.

Leon. Show not my disobedience by your prayers;
For I must still deny you, though I now
Appear more guilty to myself, than you:
I have some reasons, which I cannot utter,
That force my disobedience; yet I mourn
To death, that the first thing, you e'er enjoined me,
Should be that only one command in nature,
Which I could not obey.

Poly. I did descend too much below myself,
When I entreated him.—Hence, to thy desert!
Thou 'rt not my son, or art not fit to be.

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Amal. Great sir, I humbly beg you, make not me [*Kneeling.*
The cause of your displeasure. I absolve
Your vow; far from me be such designs;
So wretched a desire of being great,
By making him unhappy. You may see
Something so noble in the prince's nature,
As grieves him more, not to obey, than you,
That you are not obeyed.

Poly. Then, for your sake,
I 'll give him one day longer to consider,
Not to deny; for my resolves are firm
As fate, that cannot change.
[*Exeunt King and* AMAL.

Leon. And so are mine.
This beauteous princess, charming as she is,
Could never make me happy: I must first
Be false to my Palmyra, and then wretched.
But, then, a father's anger!
Suppose he should recede from his own vow,
He never would permit me to keep mine.

Enter PALMYRA; ARGALEON *following her, a little after.*

See, she appears!
I 'll think no more of anything, but her.
Yet I have one good hour ere I am wretched.
But, oh! Argaleon follows her! so night
Treads on the footsteps of a winter's sun,
And stalks all black behind him.

Palm. O, Leonidas,
For I must call you still by that dear name,
Free me from this bad man.

Leon. I hope he dares not be injurious to you.

Arga. I rather was injurious to myself,
Than her.

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Leon. That must be judged, when I hear what you said.

Arga. I think you need not give yourself that trouble:
It concerned us alone.

Leon. You answer saucily, and indirectly:
What interest can you pretend in her?

Arga. It may be, sir, I made her some expressions
Which I would not repeat, because they were
Below my rank, to one of hers.

Leon. What did he say, Palmyra?

Palm. I 'll tell you all: First, he began to look,
And then he sighed, and then he looked again;
At last, he said, my eyes wounded his heart:
And, after that, he talked of flames and fires,
And such strange words, that I believed he conjured.

Leon. O my heart!—Leave me, Argaleon.

Arga. Come, sweet Palmyra,
I will instruct you better in my meaning:
You see he would be private.

Leon. Go yourself,
And leave her here.

Arga. Alas, she 's ignorant,
And is not fit to entertain a prince.

Leon. First learn what 's fit for you; that 's to obey.

Arga. I know my duty is to wait on you.
A great king's son, like you, ought to forget
Such mean converse.

Leon. What? a disputing subject?
Hence, or my sword shall do me justice on thee.

Arga. Yet I may find a time—— [*Going.*

Leon. What 's that you mutter,—
[*Going after him.*
To find a time?—

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Arga. To wait on you again—
In the meanwhile I 'll watch you. [*Softly.*
[*Exit, and watches during the scene.*

Leon. How precious are the hours of love in courts!
In cottages, where love has all the day,
Full, and at ease, he throws it half away.
Time gives himself, and is not valued, there;
But sells at mighty rates, each minute, here:
There, he is lazy, unemployed, and slow;
Here, he 's more swift; and yet has more to do.
So many of his hours in public move,
That few are left for privacy and love.

Palm. The sun, methinks, shines faint and dimly, here;
Light is not half so long, nor half so clear:
But, oh! when every day was yours and mine,
How early up! what haste he made to shine!

Leon. Such golden days no prince must hope to see,
Whose every subject is more blessed than he.

Palm. Do you remember, when their tasks were done,
How all the youth did to our cottage run?
While winter-winds were whistling loud without,
Our cheerful hearth was circled round about:
With strokes in ashes, maids their lovers drew;
And still you fell to me, and I to you.

Leon. When love did of my heart possession take,
I was so young, my soul was scarce awake:
I cannot tell when first I thought you fair;
But sucked in love, insensibly as air.

Palm. I know too well when first my love began,
When at our wake you for the chaplet ran:

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Then I was made the lady of the May,
And, with the garland, at the goal did stay:
Still, as you ran, I kept you full in view;
I hoped, and wished, and ran, methought, for you.
As you came near, I hastily did rise,
And stretched my arm outright, that held the prize.
The custom was to kiss whom I should crown;
You kneeled, and in my lap your head laid down:
I blushed, and blushed, and did the kiss delay;
At last my subjects forced me to obey:
But, when I gave the crown, and then the kiss,
I scarce had breath to say, Take that,—and this.

Leon. I felt, the while, a pleasing kind of smart;
That kiss went, tingling, to my very heart.
When it was gone, the sense of it did stay;
The sweetness clinged upon my lips all day,
Like drops of honey, loth to fall away.

Palm. Life, like a prodigal, gave all his store
To my first youth, and now can give no more.
You are a prince; and, in that high degree,
No longer must converse with humble me.

Leon. 'Twas to my loss the gods that title gave;
A tyrant's son is doubly born a slave:
He gives a crown; but, to prevent my life
From being happy, loads it with a wife.

Palm. Speak quickly; what have you resolved to do?

Leon. To keep my faith inviolate to you.
He threatens me with exile, and with shame,
To lose my birthright, and a prince's name;
But there 's a blessing which he did not mean,
To send me back to love and you again.

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Palm. Why was not I a princess for your sake?
But heaven no more such miracles can make:
And, since that cannot, this must never be;
You shall not lose a crown for love of me.
Live happy, and a nobler choice pursue;
I shall complain of fate, but not of you.
Leon. Can you so easily without me live?
Or could you take the counsel, which you give?
Were you a princess, would you not be true?
Palm. I would; but cannot merit it from you.
Leon. Did you not merit, as you do, my heart,
Love gives esteem, and then it gives desert.
But if I basely could forget my vow,
Poor helpless innocence, what would you do?
Palm. In woods, and plains, where first my love began,
There would I live, retired from faithless man:
I 'd sit all day within some lonely shade,
Or that close arbour which your hands have made:
I 'd search the groves, and every tree, to find
Where you had carved our names upon the rind:
Your hook, your scrip, all that was yours I 'd keep,
And lay them by me when I went to sleep.
Thus would I live: And maidens, when I die,
Upon my hearse white true-love-knots should tie;
And thus my tomb should be inscribed above,
Here the forsaken Virgin rests from love.
Leon. Think not that time or fate shall e'er divide
Those hearts, which love and mutual vows have tied.
But we must part; farewell, my love.
Palm. Till when?
Leon. Till the next age of hours we meet again.
Meantime, we may,

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When near each other we in public stand,
Contrive to catch a look, or steal a hand:
Fancy will every touch and glance improve;
And draw the most* spirituous parts of love.
Our souls sit close, and silently within,
And their own web from their own entrails spin;
And when eyes meet far off, our sense is such,
That, spider-like, we feel the tenderest touch.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter RHODOPHIL, *meeting* DORALICE *and* ARTEMIS; RHODOPHIL *and* DORALICE *embrace.*

Rho. My own dear heart!

Dor. My own true love! [*She starts back.*] I had forgot myself to be so kind; indeed, I am very angry with you, dear; you are come home an hour after you appointed: if you had stayed a minute longer, I was just considering whether I should stab, hang, or drown myself.
[*Embracing him.*

Rho. Nothing but the king's business could have hindered me; and I was so vexed, that I was just laying down my commission, rather than have failed my dear. [*Kisses her hand.*

Arte. Why, this is love as it should be betwixt man and wife: such another couple would bring marriage into fashion again. But is it always thus betwixt you?

Rho. Always thus! this is nothing. I tell you, there is not such a pair of turtles in Sicily; there

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* [I should like to omit this "most," but there seems no authority for so doing. - ED.]

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is such an eternal cooing and kissing betwixt us, that indeed it is scandalous before civil company.

Dor. Well, if I had imagined I should have been this fond fool, I would never have married the man I loved: I married to be happy, and have made myself miserable by over-loving. Nay, and now my case is desperate; for I have been married above these two years, and find myself every day worse and worse in love: nothing but madness can be the end on 't.

Arte. Doat on, to the extremity, and you are happy.

Dor. He deserves so infinitely much, that, the truth is, there can be no doating in the matter; but, to love well, I confess, is a work that pays itself: 'Tis telling gold, and, after, taking it for one's pains.

Rho. By that I should be a very covetous person; for I am ever pulling out my money, and putting it into my pocket again.

Dor. O dear Rhodophil!

Rho. O sweet Doralice!

[*Embracing each other.*

Arte. [*Aside.*] Nay, I am resolved, I 'll never interrupt lovers: I 'll leave them as happy as I found them. [*Steals away.*

Rho. What, is she gone? [*Looking up.*

Dor. Yes; and without taking leave.

Rho. Then there 's enough for this time.

[*Parting from her.*

Dor. Yes, sure, the scene is done, I take it.

[*They walk contrary ways on the stage; he, with his hands in his pockets, whistling; she singing a dull melancholy tune.*

Rho. Pox o' your dull tune, a man can't think for you.

Dor. Pox o' your damned whistling; you can

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neither be company to me yourself, nor leave me to the freedom of my own fancy.

Rho. Well, thou art the most provoking wife!

Dor. Well, thou art the dullest husband, thou art never to be provoked.

Rho. I was never thought dull till I married thee; and now thou hast made an old knife of me; thou hast whetted me so long, till I have no edge left.

Dor. I see you are in the husband's fashion; you reserve all your good humours for your mistresses, and keep your ill for your wives.

Rho. Pr'ythee leave me to my own cogitations; I am thinking over all my sins, to find for which of them it was I married thee.

Dor. Whatever your sin was, mine's the punishment.

Rho. My comfort is, thou art not immortal; and, when that blessed, that divine day comes of thy departure, I 'm resolved I 'll make one holiday more in the almanac for thy sake.

Dor. Ay, you had need make a holiday for me, for I am sure you have made me a martyr.

Rho. Then, setting my victorious foot upon thy head, in the first hour of thy silence, (that is, the first hour thou art dead, for I despair of it before,) I will swear by thy ghost,—an oath as terrible to me as Styx is to the gods,—never more to be in danger of the banes* of matrimony.

Dor. And I am resolved to marry the very same day thou diest, if it be but to show how little I 'm concerned for thee.

Rho. Pray thee, Doralice, why do we quarrel thus a-days? ha! this is but a kind of heathenish life, and does not answer the ends of marriage.

* [Used with a punning intention, doubtless.—Ed.]

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If I have erred, propound what reasonable atonement may be made before we sleep, and I will not be refractory; but withal consider, I have been married these three years, and be not too tyrannical.

Dor. What should you talk of a peace a-bed, when you can give no security for performance of articles?

Rho. Then, since we must live together, and both of us stand upon our terms, as to matters of dying first, let us make ourselves as merry as we can with our misfortunes. Why, there's the devil on't! if thou couldst make my enjoying thee but a little easy, or a little more unlawful, thou shouldst see what a termagant lover I would prove. I have taken such pains to enjoy thee, Doralice, that I have fancied thee all the fine women of the town—to help me out: But now there's none left for me to think on, my imagination is quite jaded. Thou art a wife, and thou wilt be a wife, and I can make thee another no longer. [*Exit* RHO.

Dor. Well, since thou art a husband, and wilt be a husband, I'll try if I can find out another. 'Tis a pretty time we women have on't, to be made widows while we are married. Our husbands think it reasonable to complain, that we are the same, and the same to them, when we have more reason to complain, that they are not the same to us. Because they cannot feed on one dish, therefore we must be starved. 'Tis enough that they have a sufficient ordinary provided, and a table ready spread for them: If they cannot fall-to, and eat heartily, the fault is theirs; and 'tis pity, methinks, that the good creature should be lost, when many a poor sinner would be glad on't.

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Enter MELANTHA *and* ARTEMIS *to her.*

Mel. Dear, my dear, pity me, I am so *chagrin* to-day, and have had the most signal affront at court! I went this afternoon to do my devoir to princess Amalthea, found her, conversed with her, and helped to make her court some half an hour; after which, she went to take the air, chose out two ladies to go with her, that came in after me, and left me most barbarously behind her.

Arte. You are the less to be pitied, Melantha, because you subject yourself to these affronts, by coming perpetually to court, where you have no business nor employment.

Mel. I declare, I had rather of the two be rallied, nay, *mal traitée* at court, than be deified in the town; for, assuredly, nothing can be so *ridicule* as a mere town lady.

Dor. Especially at court. How I have seen them crowd and sweat in the drawing-room on a holiday-night! For that 's their time to swarm and invade the presence. O, how they catch at a bow, or any little salute from a courtier, to make show of their acquaintance! and, rather than be thought to be quite unknown, they court'sy to one another; but they take true pains to come near the circle, and press and peep upon the princess, to write letters into the country how she was dressed, while the ladies, that stand about, make their court to her with abusing them.

Arte. These are sad truths, Melantha; and therefore I would e'en advise you to quit the court, and live either wholly in the town, or, if you like not that, in the country.

Dor. In the country! nay, that 's to fall

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beneath the town, for they live upon our offals here. Their entertainment of wit is only the remembrance of what they had when they were last in town;—they live this year upon the last year's knowledge, as their cattle do all night, by chewing the cud of what they eat in the afternoon.

Mel. And they tell, for news, such unlikely stories! A letter from one of us is such a present to them, that the poor souls wait for the carrier's-day with such devotion, that they cannot sleep the night before.

Arte. No more than I can, the night before I am to go a journey.

Dor. Or I, before I am to try on a new gown.

Mel. A song, that's stale here, will be new there a twelvemonth hence; and if a man of the town by chance come amongst them, he 's reverenced for teaching them the tune.

Dor. A friend of mine, who makes songs sometimes, came lately out of the west, and vowed he was so put out of countenance with a song of his; for, at the first country gentleman's he visited, he saw three tailors cross-legged upon the table in the hall, who were tearing out as loud as ever they could sing,

———After the pangs of a desperate lover, etc.*

And that all day he heard of nothing else, but the daughters of the house, and the maids, humming it over in every corner, and the father whistling it.

Arte. Indeed, I have observed of myself, that when I am out of town but a fortnight, I am so

* [Dryden's own in *An Evening's Love.*—Ed.]

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humble, that I would receive a letter from my tailor or mercer for a favour.

Mel. When I have been at grass in the summer, and am new come up again, methinks I 'm to be turned into ridicule by all that see me; but when I have been once or twice at court, I begin to value myself again, and to despise my country acquaintance.

Arte. There are places where all people may be adored, and we ought to know ourselves so well as to choose them.

Dor. That 's very true; your little courtier's wife, who speaks to the king but once a month, need but go to a town lady, and there she may vapour and cry,—"The king and I," at every word. Your town lady, who is laughed at in the circle, takes her coach into the city, and there she 's called Your honour, and has a banquet from the merchant's wife, whom she laughs at for her kindness. And, as for my finical cit, she removes but to her country house, and there insults over the country gentlewoman that never comes up, who treats her with furmity and custard, and opens her dear bottle of *mirabilis* beside, for a gill-glass of it at parting.

Arte. At last, I see, we shall leave Melantha where we found her; for, by your description of the town and country, they are become more dreadful to her than the court, where she was affronted. But you forget we are to wait on the princess Amalthea. Come, Doralice.

Dor. Farewell, Melantha.

Mel. Adieu, my dear.

Arte. You are out of charity with her, and therefore I shall not give your service.

Mel. Do not omit it, I beseech you; for I

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have such a *tendre* for the court, that I love it even from the drawing-room to the lobby, and can never be *rebutée* by any usage. But hark you, my dears; one thing I had forgot, of great concernment.

Dor. Quickly then, we are in haste.

Mel. Do not call it my service, that's too vulgar; but do my *baise-mains* to the princess Amalthea; that is *spirituelle!*

Dor. To do you service, then, we will *prendre* the *carosse* to court, and do your *baise-mains* to the princess Amalthea, in your phrase *spirituelle.*

[*Exeunt* ARTEMIS *and* DORALICE.

Enter PHILOTIS, *with a paper in her hand.*

Mel. O, are you there, minion? And, well, are not you a most precious damsel, to retard all my visits for want of language, when you know you are paid so well for furnishing me with new words for my daily conversation? Let me die; if I have not run the risk already to speak like one of the vulgar, and if I have one phrase left in all my store, that is not threadbare *et usé*, and fit for nothing but to be thrown to peasants.

Phil. Indeed, madam, I have been very diligent in my vocation; but you have so drained all the French plays and romances, that they are not able to supply you with words for your daily expense.

Mel. Drained? What a word's there! *Epuisée*, you sot you. Come, produce your morning's work.

Phil. 'Tis here, madam. [*Shows the paper.*

Mel. O, my Venus! fourteen or fifteen words to serve me a whole day! Let me die, at this rate I cannot last till night. Come, read your

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works: Twenty to one, half of them will not pass muster neither.

Phil. *Sottises.* [*Reads.*

Mel. *Sottises: bon.* That's an excellent word to begin withal; as, for example, he or she said a thousand *sottises* to me. Proceed.

Phil. *Figure:* As, what a *figure* of a man is there! *Naive,* and *naiveté.*

Mel. Naive! as how?

Phil. Speaking of a thing that was naturally said, it was so *naive;* or, such an innocent piece of simplicity, 'twas such a *naiveté.*

Mel. Truce with your interpretations. Make haste.

Phil. *Foible, chagrin, grimace, embarrassé, double entendre, équivoque, éclaircissement, suite, bévue, façon, penchant, coup d'étourdi,* and *ridicule.*

Mel. Hold, hold; how did they begin?

Phil. They began at *sottises,* and ended *en ridicule.*

Mel. Now, give me your paper in my hand, and hold you my glass, while I practise my postures for the day. [MELANTHA *laughs in the glass.*] How does that laugh become my face?

Phil. Sovereignly well, madam.

Mel. Sovereignly? Let me die, that's not amiss. That word shall not be yours; I 'll invent it, and bring it up myself: My new point gorget shall be yours upon 't. Not a word of the word, I charge you.

Phil. I am dumb, madam.

Mel. That glance, how suits it with my face? [*Looking in the glass again.*

Phil. 'Tis so *languissant!*

Mel. Languissant! that word shall be mine too, and my last Indian gown thine for 't. That sigh? [*Looks again.*

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Phil. 'Twill make a man sigh, madam. 'Tis a mere *incendiary.*

Mel. Take my gimp petticoat for that truth. If thou hast more of these phrases, let me die but I could give away all my wardrobe, and go naked for them.

Phil. Go naked? Then you would be a Venus, madam. O Jupiter! what had I forgot? This paper was given me by Rhodophil's page.

Mel. [*Reading the letter.*] Beg the favour from you.——Gratify my passion—so far——assignation—in the grotto—behind the terrace—clock this evening——Well, for the *billets-doux* there is no man in Sicily must dispute with Rhodophil; they are so French, so *gallant*, and so *tendre*, that I cannot resist the temptation of the assignation. Now, go you away, Philotis; it imports me to practise what to say to my servant when I meet him. [*Exit* PHILOTIS.] Rhodophil, you 'll wonder at my assurance to meet you here;—let me die, I am so out of breath with coming, that I can render you no reason of it.—Then he will make this *repartee;* Madam, I have no reason to accuse you for that which is so great a favour to me.—Then I reply, But why have you drawn me to this solitary place? Let me die, but I am apprehensive of some violence from you.—Then says he, Solitude, madam, is most fit for lovers; but by this fair hand——Nay, now I vow you 're rude, sir. O fy, fy, fy; I hope you 'll be honourable?—You 'd laugh at me if I should, madam.—What, do you mean to throw me down thus? Ah me! ah! ah! ah!

Enter POLYDAMAS, LEONIDAS, *and Guards.*

O Venus! the king and court. Let me die, but

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I fear they have found my *foible*, and will turn me into *ridicule*. [*Exit, running.*

Leon. Sir, I beseech you.

Poly. Do not urge my patience.

Leon. I 'll not deny,
But what your spies informed you of is true:
I love the fair Palmyra; but I loved her
Before I knew your title to my blood.

Enter PALMYRA *guarded.*

See, here she comes, and looks, amidst her guards,
Like a weak dove under the falcon's gripe.
O heaven, I cannot bear it.

Poly. Maid, come hither.
Have you presumed so far, as to receive
My son's affections?

Palm. Alas, what shall I answer? To confess it
Will raise a blush upon a virgin's face;
Yet I was ever taught 'twas base to lie.

Poly. You 've been too bold, and you must love no more.

Palm. Indeed I must; I cannot help my love;
I was so tender when I took the bent,
That now I grow that way.

Poly. He is a prince, and you are meanly born.

Leon. Love either finds equality, or makes it:
Like death, he knows no difference in degrees,
But plains, and levels all.

Palm. Alas! I had not rendered up my heart,
Had he not loved me first; but he preferred me
Above the maidens of my age and rank,—
Still shunned their company, and still sought mine.
I was not won by gifts, yet still he gave;
And all his gifts, though small, yet spake his love.
He picked the earliest strawberries in woods,
The clustered filberts, and the purple grapes;

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He taught a prating stare* to speak my name;
And, when he found a nest of nightingales,
Or callow linnets, he would show them me,
And let me take them out.
Poly. This is a little mistress, meanly born,
Fit only for a prince's vacant hours,
And then, to laugh at her simplicity,
Not fix a passion there. Now hear my sentence.
Leon. Remember, ere you give it, 'tis pronounced
Against us both.
Poly. First, in her hand
There shall be placed a player's painted sceptre,
And, on her head, a gilded pageant crown:
Thus shall she go,
With all the boys attending on her triumph;
That done, be put alone into a boat,
With bread and water only for three days;
So on the sea she shall be set adrift,
And who relieves her dies.
Palm. I only beg that you would execute
The last part first: Let me be put to sea;
The bread and water for my three days' life
I give you back, I would not live so long;
But let me 'scape the shame.
Leon. Look to me, piety; and you, O Gods, look to my piety!
Keep me from saying that, which misbecomes a son;
But let me die before I see this done.
Poly. If you for ever will abjure her sight,
I can be yet a father; she shall live.
Leon. Hear, O you powers! is this to be a father?
I see 'tis all my happiness and quiet
You aim at, sir; and take them:

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* ["Starling."—Ed.]

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I will not save even my Palmyra's life
At that ignoble price; but I 'll die with her.
Palm. So had I done by you,
Had fate made me a princess.—Death, methinks,
Is not a terror now:
He is not fierce, or grim, but fawns, and soothes me,
And slides along, like Cleopatra's aspick,
Offering his service to my troubled breast.
Leon. Begin what you have purposed when you please;
Lead her to scorn, your triumph shall be doubled.
As holy priests,
In pity, go with dying malefactors,
So I will share her shame.
Poly. You shall not have your will so much; first part them,
Then execute your office.
Leon. No; I 'll die
In her defence. [*Draws his sword.*
Palm. Ah, hold, and pull not on
A curse, to make me worthy of my death:
Do not by lawless force oppose your father,
Whom you have too much disobeyed for me.
Leon. Here, take it, sir, and with it pierce my heart: [*Presenting his sword to his Father upon his knees.*
You have done more in taking my Palmyra.
You are my father; therefore I submit.
Poly. Keep him from anything he may design
Against his life, while the first fury lasts;
And now perform what I commanded you.
Leon. In vain; if sword and poison be denied me,
I 'll hold my breath and die.
Palm. Farewell, my lost* Leonidas; yet live,

* [Edd. "last," but, it would appear, wrongly.—Ed.]

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I charge you, live, 'till you believe me dead.
I cannot die in peace, if you die first;
If life 's a blessing, you shall have it last.

Poly. Go on with her, and lead him after me.

Enter ARGALEON *hastily, with* HERMOGENES.

Arga. I bring you, sir, such news as must amaze you,
And such as will prevent you from an action,
Which would have rendered all your life unhappy.
[HERMOGENES *kneels.*

Poly. Hermogenes, you bend your knees in vain,
My doom 's already past.

Her. I kneel not for Palmyra, for I know
She will not need my prayers; but for myself:
With a feigned tale I have abused your ears,
And, therefore, merit death: but since, unforced,
I first accuse myself, I hope your mercy.

Poly. Haste to explain your meaning.

Her. Then, in few words, Palmyra is your daughter.

Poly. How can I give belief to this impostor?
He, who has once abused me, often may.
I 'll hear no more.

Arga. For your own sake, you must.

Her. A parent's love,—for I confess my crime,—
Moved me to say, Leonidas was yours;
But when I heard Palmyra was to die,
The fear of guiltless blood so stung my conscience,
That I resolved, even with my shame, to save
Your daughter's life.

Poly. But how can I be certain, but that interest,
Which moved you first to say your son was mine,
Does not now move you too, to save your daughter?

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Her. You had but then my word; I bring you now
Authentic testimonies. Sir, in short,
[*Delivers on his knees a jewel, and letter.*
If this will not convince you, let me suffer.
Poly. I know this jewel well; 'twas once my mother's, [*Looking first on the jewel.*
Which, marrying, I presented to my wife.
And this, O this is my Eudocia's hand.
This was the pledge of love given to Eudocia,
[Reads.
Who, dying, to her young Palmyra leaves it;
And this, when you, my dearest lord, receive,
Own her, and think on me, dying Eudocia.
Take it; 'tis well there is no more to read.
[*To* ARGA.
My eyes grow full, and swim in their own light.
[*He embraces* PALM.
Palm. I fear, sir, this is your intended pageant.
You sport yourself at poor Palmyra's cost;
But if you think to make me proud,
Indeed I cannot be so: I was born
With humble thoughts, and lowly, like my birth.
A real fortune could not make me haughty,
Much less a feigned.
Poly. This was her mother's temper.
I have too much deserved thou shouldst suspect
That I am not thy father; but my love
Shall henceforth show I am. Behold my eyes,
And see a father there begin to flow:
This is not feigned, Palmyra.
Palm. I doubt no longer, sir; you are a king,
And cannot lie: Falsehood 's a vice too base
To find a room in any royal breast.
I know, in spite of my unworthiness,
I am your child; for when you would have killed me,
Methought I loved you then.

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Arga. Sir, we forget the prince Leonidas;
His greatness should not stand neglected thus.
Poly. Guards, you may now retire; Give him his sword,
And leave him free.
Leon. Then the first use I make of liberty
Shall be, with your permission, mighty sir,
To pay that reverence to which nature binds me.
[*Kneels to* HERMOGENES.
Arga. Sure you forget your birth, thus to misplace
This act of your obedience; you should kneel
To nothing but to heaven, and to a king.
Leon. I never shall forget what nature owes,
Nor be ashamed to pay it; though my father
Be not a king, I know him brave and honest,
And well deserving of a worthier son.
Poly. He bears it gallantly.
Leon. Why would you not instruct me, sir, before, [*To* HERM.
Where I should place my duty?
From which, if ignorance have made me swerve,
I beg your pardon for an erring son.
Palm. I almost grieve I am a princess, since
It makes him lose a crown.
Leon. And next, to you, my king, thus low I kneel,
To implore your mercy; if in that small time
I had the honour to be thought your son,
I paid not strict obedience to your will.
I thought, indeed, I should not be compelled,
But thought it as your son; so what I took
In duty from you, I restored in courage;
Because your son should not be forced.
Poly. You have my pardon for it.
Leon. To you, fair princess, I congratulate
Your birth; of which I ever thought you worthy:

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And give me leave to add, that I am proud
The gods have picked me out to be the man,
By whose dejected fate yours is to rise;
Because no man could more desire your fortune,
Or franklier part with his, to make you great.

Palm. I know the king, though you are not his son,
Will still regard you as my foster-brother,
And so conduct you downward from a throne,
By slow degrees, so unperceived and soft,
That it may seem no fall: Or, if it be,
May fortune lay a bed of down beneath you!

Poly. He shall be ranked with my nobility,
And kept from scorn by a large pension given him.

Leon. You are all great and royal in your gifts; [*Bowing.*
But at the donor's feet I lay them down:
Should I take riches from you, it would seem
As I did want a soul to bear that poverty,
To which the gods designed my humble birth:
And should I take your honours without merit,
It would appear, I wanted manly courage
To hope them, in your service, from my sword.

Poly. Still brave, and like yourself.
The court shall shine this night in its full splendour,
And celebrate this new discovery.
Argaleon, lead my daughter: As we go,
I shall have time to give her my commands,
In which you are concerned.
[*Exeunt all but* LEONIDAS.

Leon. Methinks, I do not want
That huge long train of fawning followers,
That swept a furlong after me.
'Tis true I am alone;
So was the Godhead, ere he made the world,
And better served himself, than served by nature.

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And yet I have a soul
Above this humble fate. I could command,
Love to do good, give largely to true merit,
All that a king should do: But though these are not
My province, I have scene enough within,
To exercise my virtue.
All that a heart, so fixed as mine, can move,
Is, that my niggard fortune starves my love.
[*Exit.**

SCENE II.

PALAMEDE *and* DORALICE *meet: She, with a book in her hand, seems to start at the sight of him.*

Dor. 'Tis a strange thing that no warning will serve your turn; and that no retirement will secure me from your impertinent addresses! Did not I tell you, that I was to be private here at my devotions?

Pala. Yes; and you see I have observed my cue exactly: I am come to relieve you from them. Come, shut up, shut up your book; the man's come who is to supply all your necessities.

Dor. Then, it seems, you are so impudent to think it was an assignation? This, I warrant, was your lewd interpretation of my innocent meaning.

Pala. Venus forbid, that I should harbour so unreasonable a thought of a fair young lady, that you should lead me hither into temptation. I confess, I might think indeed it was a kind of honourable challenge, to meet privately without seconds, and decide the difference betwixt the two sexes; but heaven forgive me, if I thought amiss.

* [Note the excellent blank verse here.—ED.]

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Dor. You thought too, I 'll lay my life on 't, that you might as well make love to me, as my husband does to your mistress.

Pala. I was so unreasonable to think so too.

Dor. And then you wickedly inferred, that there was some justice in the revenge of it; or, at least, but little injury for a man to endeavour to enjoy that, which he counts a blessing, and which is not valued as it ought by the dull possessor. Confess your wickedness,—did you not think so?

Pala. I confess I was thinking so, as fast as I could; but you think so much before me, that you will let me think nothing.

Dor. 'Tis the very thing that I designed; I have forestalled all your arguments, and left you without a word more, to plead for mercy. If you have anything farther to offer, ere sentence pass ——Poor animal, I brought you hither only for my diversion.

Pala. That you may have, if you 'll make use of me the right way; but I tell thee, woman, I am now past talking.

Dor. But it may be, I came hither to hear what fine things you could say for yourself.

Pala. You would be very angry, to my knowledge, if I should lose so much time to say many of them.—By this hand you would!

Dor. Fie, Palamede, I am a woman of honour.

Pala. I see you are; you have kept touch with your assignation: And before we part, you shall find that I am a man of honour. Yet I have one scruple of conscience——

Dor. I warrant you will not want some naughty argument, or other, to satisfy yourself.—I hope you are afraid of betraying your friend?

Pala. Of betraying my friend! I am more

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afraid of being betrayed by you to my friend. You women now are got into the way of telling first yourselves: A man, who has any care of his reputation, will be loth to trust it with you.

Dor. O, you charge your faults upon our sex! You men are like cocks; you never make love, but you clap your wings, and crow when you have done.

Pala. Nay, rather you women are like hens; you never lay, but you cackle an hour after, to discover your nest.—But I 'll venture it for once.

Dor. To convince you that you are in the wrong, I 'll retire into the dark grotto to my devotion, and make so little noise, that it shall be impossible for you to find me.

Pala. But if I find you——

Dor. Ay, if you find me—But I 'll put you to search in more corners than you imagine.

[*She runs in, and he after her.*

Enter RHODOPHIL *and* MELANTHA.

Mel. Let me die, but this solitude, and that grotto are scandalous; I 'll go no further; besides, you have a sweet lady of your own.

Rho. But a sweet mistress, now and then, makes my sweet lady so much more sweet.

Mel. I hope you will not force me?

Rho. But I will, if you desire it.

Pala. [*Within.*] Where the devil are you, madam? 'Sdeath, I begin to be weary of this hide and seek: If you stay a little longer, till the fit 's over, I 'll hide in my turn, and put you to the finding me. [*He enters, and sees* RHODOPHIL *and* MELANTHA.] How! Rhodophil and my mistress!

Mel. My servant, to apprehend me! this is *surprenant au dernier.*

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Rho. I must on; there 's nothing but impudence can help me out.

Pala. Rhodophil, how came you hither in so good company?

Rho. As you see, Palamede; an effect of pure friendship; I was not able to live without you.

Pala. But what makes my mistress with you?

Rho. Why, I heard you were here alone, and could not in civility but bring her to you.

Mel. You 'll pardon the effects of a passion which I may now avow for you, if it transported me beyond the rules of *bienséance.*

Pala. But, who told you I was here? they, that told you that, may tell you more, for aught I know.

Rho. O, for that matter, we had intelligence.

Pala. But let me tell you, we came hither so very privately, that you could not trace us.

Rho. Us! what us? you are alone.

Pala. Us! the devil 's in me for mistaking:—me, I meant. Or us, that is, you are me, or I you, as we are friends: That 's us.

Dor. Palamede, Palamede! [*Within.*

Rho. I should know that voice; who 's within there, that calls you?

Pala. Faith, I can't imagine; I believe the place is haunted.

Dor. Palamede, Palamede, all cocks hidden.* [*Within.*

Pala. Lord, Lord, what shall I do?—Well, dear friend, to let you see I scorn to be jealous, and that I dare trust my mistress with you, take her back, for I would not willingly have her frighted, and I am resolved to see who 's there; I 'll not be daunted with a bugbear, that 's

* [Obviously a cry in the game of "Hide and Seek."—Ed.]

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certain:—Prithee, dispute it not, it shall be so; nay, do not put me to swear, but go quickly: There 's an effort of pure friendship for you now.

Enter DORALICE, *and looks amazed, seeing them.*

Rho. Doralice! I am thunder-struck to see you here.

Pala. So am I! quite thunder-struck. Was it you, that called me within?—I must be impudent.

Rho. How came you hither, spouse?

Pala. Ay, how came you hither? And, which is more, how could you be here without my knowledge?

Dor. [*To her husband.*] O, gentlemen, have I caught you i' faith! have I broke forth in ambush upon you! I thought my suspicions would prove true.

Rho. Suspicions! this is very fine, spouse! Prithee, what suspicions?

Dor. O, you feign ignorance: Why, of you and Melantha; here have I stayed these two hours, waiting with all the rage of a passionate, loving wife, but infinitely jealous, to take you two in the manner; for hither I was certain you would come.

Rho. But you are mistaken, spouse, in the occasion; for we came hither on purpose to find Palamede, on intelligence he was gone before.

Pala. I 'll be hanged then, if the same party, who gave you intelligence I was here, did not tell your wife you would come hither. Now I smell the malice on 't on both sides.

Dor. Was it so, think you? nay, then, I 'll confess my part of the malice too. As soon as ever I spied my husband and Melantha come

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together, I had a strange temptation to make him jealous in revenge; and that made me call Palamede, Palamede! as though there had been an intrigue between us.

Mel. Nay, I avow, there was an appearance of an intrigue between us too.

Pala. To see how things will come about!

Rho. And was it only thus, my dear Doralice? [*Embrace.*

Dor. And did I wrong *n'own Rhodophil, with a false suspicion? [*Embracing him.*

Pala. [*Aside.*] Now I am confident we had all four the same design: 'Tis a pretty odd kind of game this, where each of us plays for double stakes: This is just thrust and parry with the same motion; I am to get his wife, and yet to guard my own mistress. But I am vilely suspicious, that, while I conquer in the right wing, I shall be routed in the left; for both our women will certainly betray their party, because they are each of them for gaining of two, as well as we; and I much fear,

If their necessities and ours were known,
They have more need of two, than we of one.

[*Exeunt, embracing one another.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter LEONIDAS, *musing;* AMALTHEA, *following him.*

Amal. Yonder he is; and I must speak or die; And yet 'tis death to speak: yet he must know

* [This "n," short for "mine," like "nuncle" for "uncle," is common in the "little language" of the time.—ED.]

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I have a passion for him, and may know it
With a less blush; because to offer it
To his low fortunes, shows I loved before,
His person, not his greatness.
Leon. First scorned, and now commanded from the court!
The king is good; but he is wrought to this
By proud Argaleon's malice.
What more disgrace can love and fortune join
To inflict upon one man? I cannot now
Behold my dear Palmyra: She, perhaps, too,
Is grown ashamed of a mean ill-placed love.
Amal. Assist me, Venus, for I tremble when
I am to speak, but I must force myself. [*Aside.*
Sir, I would crave but one short minute with you,
And some few words.
Leon. The proud Argaleon's sister! [*Aside.*
Amal. Alas! it will not out; Shame stops my mouth. [*Aside.*
Pardon my error, sir; I was mistaken,
And took you for another.
Leon. In spite of all his guards, I'll see Palmyra; [*Aside.*
Though meanly born, I have a kingly soul.
Amal. I stand upon a precipice, where fain
I would retire, but love still thrusts me on:
Now I grow bolder, and will speak to him.
[*Aside.*
Sir, 'tis indeed to you that I would speak,
And if——
Leon. O, you are sent to scorn my fortunes?
Your sex and beauty are your privilege;
But should your brother——
Amal. Now he looks angry, and I dare not speak.
I had some business with you, sir,
But 'tis not worth your knowledge.

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Leon. Then 'twill be charity to let me mourn
My griefs alone, for I am much disordered.
Amal. 'Twill be more charity to mourn them with you:
Heaven knows I pity you.
Leon. Your pity, madam,
Is generous, but 'tis unavailable.
Amal. You know not till 'tis tried.
Your sorrows are no secret; you have lost
A crown, and mistress.
Leon. Are not these enough?
Hang two such weights on any other soul,
And see if it can bear them.
Amal. More; you are banished, by my brother's means,
And ne'er must hope again to see your princess;
Except as prisoners view fair walks and streets,
And careless passengers going by their grates,
To make them feel the want of liberty.
But, worse than all,
The king this morning has enjoined his daughter
To accept my brother's love.
Leon. Is this your pity?
You aggravate my griefs, and print them deeper,
In new and heavier stamps.
Amal. 'Tis as physicians show the desperate ill,
To endear their art, by mitigating pains
They cannot wholly cure: When you despair
Of all you wish, some part of it, because
Unhoped for, may be grateful; and some other——
Leon. What other?
Amal. Some other may——
My shame again has seized me, and I can go
No farther. [*Aside.*
Leon. These often failing sighs and interruptions

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Make me imagine you have grief like mine:
Have you ne'er loved?
Amal. I? never!—'Tis in vain:
I must despair in silence. [*Aside.*
Leon. You come, as I suspected then, to mock,
At least observe, my griefs: Take it not ill,
That I must leave you. [*Is going.*
Amal. You must not go with these unjust opinions.
Command my life and fortunes: you are wise;
Think, and think well, what I can do to serve you.
Leon. I have but one thing in my thoughts and wishes:
If, by your means, I can obtain the sight
Of my adored Palmyra; or, what 's harder,
One minute's time, to tell her, I die hers—
[*She starts back.*
I see I am not to expect it from you;
Nor could, indeed, with reason.
Amal. Name any other thing! Is Amalthea
So despicable, she can serve your wishes
In this alone?
Leon. If I should ask of heaven,
I have no other suit.
Amal. To show you, then, I can deny you nothing,
Though 'tis more hard to me than any other,
Yet I will do it for you.
Leon. Name quickly, name the means! speak, my good angel!
Amal. Be not so much o'erjoyed; for, if you are,
I 'll rather die than do 't. This night the court
Will be in masquerade;
You shall attend on me; in that disguise
You may both see and speak to her,
If you dare venture it.

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Leon. Yes; were a god her guardian,
And bore in each hand thunder, I would venture.
Amal. Farewell, then; two hours hence I will expect you:—
My heart 's so full, that I can stay no longer.
[*Exit.*
Leon. Already it grows dusky: I 'll prepare
With haste for my disguise. But who are these?

Enter HERMOGENES *and* EUBULUS.

Her. 'Tis he; we need not fear to speak to him.
Eub. Leonidas?
Leon. Sure I have known that voice.
Her. You have some reason, sir: 'tis Eubulus,
Who bred you with the princess; and, departing,
Bequeathed you to my care.
Leon. My foster-father! let my knees express
My joys for your return! [*Kneeling.*
Eub. Rise, sir; you must not kneel.
Leon. E'er since you left me,
I have been wandering in a maze of fate,
Led by false fires of a fantastic glory,
And the vain lustre of imagined crowns.
But, ah! why would you leave me? or how could you
Absent yourself so long?
Eub. I 'll give you a most just account of both:
And something more I have to tell you, which
I know must cause your wonder; but this place,
Though almost hid in darkness, is not safe.
Already I discern some coming towards us
[*Torches appear.*
With lights, who may discover me. Hermogenes,
Your lodgings are hard by, and much more private.
Her. There you may freely speak.

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Leon. Let us make haste;
For some affairs, and of no small importance,
Call me another way. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter PALAMEDE *and* RHODOPHIL, *with Vizor Masques in their Hands, and Torches before them.*

Pala. We shall have noble sport to-night, Rhodophil; this masquerading is a most glorious invention.

Rho. I believe it was invented first by some jealous lover, to discover the haunts of his jilting mistress; or, perhaps, by some distressed servant, to gain an opportunity with a jealous man's wife.

Pala. No, it must be the invention of a woman, it has so much of subtilty and love in it.

Rho. I am sure 'tis extremely pleasant; for to go unknown, is the next degree to going invisible.

Pala. What with our antic habits and feigned voices,—*Do you know me?* and—*I know you,*—methinks we move and talk just like so many overgrown puppets.

Rho. Masquerade is only vizor-mask* improved; a heightening of the same fashion.

Pala. No, masquerade is vizor-mask in debauch, and I like it the better for 't: for, with a vizor-mask, we fool ourselves into courtship, for the sake of an eye that glanced; or a hand that stole itself out of the glove sometimes, to give us a sample of the skin: But in masquerade there is nothing to be known,† she 's all *terra incognita;*

* [As often noticed, the mask in public places was the sign of a courtesan.—ED.]

† [The domino being a complete disguise.—ED.]

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and the bold discoverer leaps ashore, and takes his lot among the wild Indians and savages, without the vile consideration of safety to his person, or of beauty, or wholesomeness in his mistress.

Enter BELIZA.

Rho. Beliza, what make you here?

Bel. Sir, my lady sent me after you, to let you know, she finds herself a little indisposed; so that she cannot be at court, but is retired to rest in her own apartment, where she shall want* the happiness of your dear embraces to-night.

Rho. A very fine phrase, Beliza, to let me know my wife desires to lie alone.

Pala. I doubt, Rhodophil, you take the pains sometimes to instruct your wife's woman in these elegancies.

Rho. Tell my dear lady, that since I must be so unhappy as not to wait on her to-night, I will lament bitterly for her absence. 'Tis true I shall be at court, but I will take no divertisement there; and when I return to my solitary bed, if I am so forgetful of my passion as to sleep, I will dream of her; and betwixt sleep and waking, put out my foot towards her side, for midnight consolation; and, not finding him I will sigh, and imagine myself a most desolate widower.

Bel. I shall do your commands, sir. [*Exit.*

Rho. [*Aside.*] She 's sick as aptly for my purpose, as if she had contrived it so. Well, if ever woman was a help-mate for man, my spouse is so; for within this hour I received a note from Melantha, that she would meet me this evening in masquerade, in boys' habit, to rejoice with

* [*i.e.* "lack," not "desire."—ED.]

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me before she entered into fetters; for I find she loves me better than Palamede, only because he's to be her husband. There's something of antipathy in the word *marriage* to the nature of love: marriage is the mere ladle of affection, that cools it when 'tis never so fiercely boiling over.

Pala. Dear Rhodophil, I must needs beg your pardon; there is an occasion fallen out which I had forgot: I cannot be at court to-night.

Rho. Dear Palamede, I am sorry we shall not have one course together at the herd; but I find your game lies single: Good fortune to you with your mistress. [*Exit.*

Pala. He has wished me good fortune with his wife; there's no sin in this then, there's fair leave given. Well, I must go visit the sick; I cannot resist the temptations of my charity. O what a difference will she find betwixt a dull resty* husband, and a quick vigorous lover! He sets out like a carrier's horse, plodding on, because he knows he must, with the bells of matrimony chiming so melancholy about his neck, in pain till he's at his journey's end; and, despairing to get thither, he is fain to fortify imagination with the thoughts of another woman: I take heat after heat, like a well-breathed courser, and —But hark, what noise is that? Swords! [*Clashing of swords within.*] Nay, then, have with you. [*Exit* PALA.

Re-enter PALAMEDE, *with* RHODOPHIL; *and* DORALICE *in man's habit.*

Rho. Friend, your relief was timely, otherwise I had been oppressed.

* ["Resty" = "inclined to rest." Not "restive" in the ordinary sense.—ED.]

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Pala. What was the quarrel?

Rho. What I did was in rescue of this youth.

Pala. What cause could he give them?

Dor. The cause was nothing but only the common cause of fighting in masquerades: They were drunk, as I was sober.

Rho. Have they not hurt you?

Dor. No; but I am exceeding ill with the fright on 't.

Pala. Let 's lead him to some place, where he may refresh himself.

Rho. Do you conduct him then.

Pala. [*Aside.*] How cross this happens to my design of going to Doralice! for I am confident she was sick on purpose that I should visit her. Hark you, Rhodophil, could not you take care of the stripling? I am partly engaged to-night.

Rho. You know I have business; but come, youth, if it must be so.

Dor. to *Rho.* No, good sir, do not give yourself that trouble; I shall be safer, and better pleased with your friend here.

Rho. Farewell, then; once more I wish you a good adventure.

Pala. Damn this kindness! now must I be troubled with this young rogue, and miss my opportunity with Doralice.

[*Exit* RHO. *alone;* PALA. *with* DOR.

SCENE III.

Enter POLYDAMAS.

Poly. Argaleon counselled well to banish him;
He has, I know not what,
Of greatness in his looks, and of high fate,
That almost awes me; but I fear my daughter,

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Who hourly moves me for him; and I marked,
She sighed when I but named Argaleon to her.
But see, the maskers: Hence, my cares, this night!
At least take truce, and find me on my pillow.

Enter the Princess in masquerade, with Ladies. At the other end, ARGALEON *and Gentlemen in masquerade; then* LEONIDAS *leading* AMALTHEA. *The King sits. A Dance. After the Dance.*

Amal. to *Leon.* That 's the princess;
I saw the habit ere she put it on.

Leon. I know her by a thousand other signs;
She cannot hide so much divinity,
Disguised, and silent, yet some graceful motion
Breaks from her, and shines round her like a glory. [*Goes to* PALMYRA.

Amal. Thus she reveals herself, and knows it not:
Like love's dark lanthorn, I direct his steps,
And yet he sees not that, which gives him light.

Palm. I know you; but, alas! Leonidas,
Why should you tempt this danger on yourself?

Leon. Madam, you know me not, if you believe
I would not hazard greater for your sake.
But you, I fear, are changed.

Palm. No, I am still the same;
But there are many things became Palmyra,
Which ill become the princess.

Leon. I ask nothing
Which honour will not give you leave to grant:
One hour's short audience, at my father's house,
You cannot sure refuse me.

Palm. Perhaps I should, did I consult strict virtue;
But something must be given to love and you.
When would you I should come?

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Leon. This evening, with the speediest opportunity.
I have a secret to discover to you,
Which will surprise and please you.
Palm. 'Tis enough.
Go now; for we may be observed and known.
I trust your honour; give me not occasion
To blame myself or you.
Leon. You never shall repent your good opinion. [*Kisses her hand, and Exit.*
Arga. I cannot be deceived; that is the princess:
One of her maids betrayed the habit to me.
But who was he with whom she held discourse?
'Tis one she favours, for he kissed her hand.
Our shapes are like, our habits near the same;
She may mistake, and speak to me for him.
I am resolved; I 'll satisfy my doubts,
Though to be more tormented.

SONG.

I.

Whilst Alexis lay prest
In her arms he loved best,
With his hands round her neck,
And his head on her breast,
He found the fierce pleasure too hasty to stay,
And his soul in the tempest just flying away.

II.

When Cœlia saw this,
With a sigh and a kiss,
She cried,—O, my dear, I am robbed of my bliss!
'Tis unkind to your love, and unfaithfully done,
To leave me behind you, and die all alone.

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III.

The youth, though in haste,
And breathing his last,
In pity died slowly, while she died more fast;
Till at length she cried,—Now, my dear, now let us go;
Now die, my Alexis, and I will die too!

IV.

Thus entranced they did lie,
Till Alexis did try
To recover new breath, that again he might die:
Then often they died; but the more they did so,
The nymph died more quick, and the shepherd more slow.

Another Dance. After it, ARGALEON *re-enters, and stands by the Princess.*

Palm. Leonidas, what means this quick return? [*To* ARGA.

Arga. O heaven! 'tis what I feared.

Palm. Is aught of moment happened since you went?

Arga. No, madam; but I understood not fully Your last commands.

Palm. And yet you answered to them. Retire; you are too indiscreet a lover: I 'll meet you where I promised. [*Exit.*

Arga. O my curst fortune! what have I discovered! But I will be revenged. [*Whispers to the King.*

Poly. But are you certain you are not deceived?

Arga. Upon my life.

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Poly. Her honour is concerned.
Somewhat I 'll do; but I am yet distracted,
And know not where to fix. I wished a child,
And heaven, in anger, granted my request.
So blind we are, our wishes are so vain,
That what we most desire, proves most our pain.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

An Eating-house. Bottles of Wine on the table. PALAMEDE, *and* DORALICE, *in Man's Habit.*

Dor. [*Aside.*] Now cannot I find in my heart to discover myself, though I long he should know me.

Pala. I tell thee, boy, now I have seen thee safe, I must be gone: I have no leisure to throw away on thy raw conversation; I am a person that understands better things, I.

Dor. Were I a woman, oh how you would admire me! cry up every word I said, and screw your face into a submissive smile; as I have seen a dull gallant act wit, and counterfeit pleasantness, when he whispers to a great person in a play-house; smile, and look briskly, when the other answers, as if something of extraordinary had past betwixt them, when, heaven knows, there was nothing else but,—What a clock does your lordship think it is? And my lord's *repartee* is,—It is almost park-time: or, at most,—Shall we out of the pit, and go behind the scenes for an act or two? And yet such fine things as these would be wit in a mistress's mouth.

Pala. Ay, boy; there dame Nature 's in the case: He, who cannot find wit in a mistress, deserves to find nothing else, boy. But these

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are riddles to thee, child, and I have not leisure to instruct thee; I have affairs to despatch, great affairs; I am a man of business.

Dor. Come, you shall not go: You have no affairs but what you may despatch here, to my knowledge.

Pala. I find now, thou art a boy of more understanding than I thought thee; a very lewd wicked boy: O' my conscience, thou wouldst debauch me, and hast some evil designs upon my person.

Dor. You are mistaken, sir; I would only have you show me a more lawful reason why you would leave me, than I can why you should not, and I 'll not stay you; for I am not so young, but I understand the necessities of flesh and blood, and the pressing occasions of mankind, as well as you.

Pala. A very forward and understanding boy! thou art in great danger of a page's wit, to be brisk at fourteen, and dull at twenty. But I 'll give thee no further account; I must, and will go.

Dor. My life on it, your mistress is not at home.

Pala. This imp will make me very angry.—I tell thee, young sir, she is at home, and at home for me; and, which is more, she is a-bed for me, and sick for me.

Dor. For you only?

Pala. Ay, for me only.

Dor. But how do you know she 's sick a-bed?

Pala. She sent her husband word so.

Dor. And are you such a novice in love, to believe a wife's message to her husband?

Pala. Why, what the devil should be her meaning else?

Dor. It may be, to go in masquerade, as well

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as you; to observe your haunts, and keep you company without your knowledge.

Pala. Nay, I 'll trust her for that: She loves me too well, to disguise herself from me.

Dor. If I were she, I would disguise on purpose to try your wit; and come to my servant like a riddle,—Read me, and take me.

Pala. I could know her in any shape: My good genius would prompt me to find out a handsome woman: There's something that would attract me to her without my knowledge.

Dor. Then you make a load-stone of your mistress?

Pala. Yes, and I carry steel about me, which has been so often touched, that it never fails to point to the north pole.

Dor. Yet still my mind gives me, that you have met her disguised to-night, and have not known her.

Pala. This is the most pragmatical conceited little fellow, he will needs understand my business better than myself. I tell thee, once more, thou dost not know my mistress.

Dor. And I tell you once more, that I know her better than you do.

Pala. The boy's resolved to have the last word. I find I must go without reply. [*Exit.*

Dor. Ah mischief, I have lost him with my fooling. Palamede, Palamede!

He returns. She plucks off her peruke, and puts it on again when he knows her.

Pala. O heavens! is it you, madam?

Dor. Now, where was your good genius, that would prompt you to find me out?

Pala. Why, you see I was not deceived; you yourself were my good genius.

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Dor. But where was the steel, that knew the load-stone? Ha?

Pala. The truth is, madam, the steel has lost its virtue: and, therefore, if you please, we 'll new touch it.

Enter RHODOPHIL; *and* MELANTHA *in Boy's habit.* RHODOPHIL *sees* PALAMEDE *kissing* DORALICE'S *hand.*

Rho. Palamede again! am I fallen into your quarters? What? Engaging with a boy? Is all honourable?

Pala. O, very honourable on my side. I was just chastising this young villain; he was running away, without paying his share of the reckoning.

Rho. Then I find I was deceived in him.

Pala. Yes, you are deceived in him: 'tis the archest rogue, if you did but know him.

Mel. Good Rhodophil, let us get off *à la dérobée*, for fear I should be discovered.

Rho. There 's no retiring now; I warrant you for discovery. Now have I the oddest thought, to entertain you before your servant's face, and he never the wiser; it will be the prettiest juggling trick, to cheat him when he looks upon us.

Mel. This is the strangest caprice in you.

Pala. [*to* DORALICE.] This Rhodophil 's the unluckiest fellow to me! this is now the second time he has barred the dice when we were just ready to have nicked him; but if ever I get the box again—

Dor. Do you think he will not know me? Am I like myself?

Pala. No more than a picture in the hangings.

Dor. Nay, then he can never discover me,

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now the wrong side of the arras is turned towards him.

Pala. At least, it will be some pleasure to me, to enjoy what freedom I can while he looks on; I will storm the out-works of matrimony even before his face.

Rho. What wine have you there, Palamede?

Pala. Old Chios, or the rogue 's damn'd that drew it.

Rho. Come,—to the most constant of mistresses! that, I believe, is yours, Palamede.

Dor. Pray spare your seconds; for my part I am but a weak brother.

Pala. Now,—to the truest of turtles! that is your wife, Rhodophil, that lies sick at home, in the bed of honour.

Rho. Now let us have one common health, and so have done.

Dor. Then, for once, I 'll begin it. Here 's to him that has the fairest lady of Sicily in masquerade to-night!

Pala. This is such an obliging health, I 'll kiss thee, dear rogue, for thy invention. [*Kisses her.*

Rho. He, who has this lady, is a happy man, without dispute,—I 'm most concerned in this, I am sure. [*Aside.*

Pala. Was it not well found out, Rhodophil?

Mel. Ay, this was *bien trouvée* indeed.

Dor. [*to* MELANTHA.] I suppose I shall do you a kindness, to inquire if you have not been in France, sir?

Mel. To do you service, sir.

Dor. O, monsieur, *votre valet bien humble.* [*Saluting her.*

Mel. Votre esclave, monsieur, de tout mon cœur. [*Returning the salute.*

Dor. I suppose, sweet sir, you are the hope

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and joy of some thriving citizen, who has pinched himself at home, to breed you abroad, where you have learned your exercises, as it appears, most awkwardly, and are returned, with the addition of a new-laced bosom and a clap, to your good old father, who looks at you with his mouth, while you spout French with your man monsieur.

Pala. Let me kiss thee again for that, dear rogue.

Mel. And you, I imagine, are my young master, whom your mother durst not trust upon salt-water, but left you to be your own tutor at fourteen, to be very brisk and *entreprenant*, to endeavour to be debauched ere you have learned the knack of it, to value yourself upon a clap before you can get it, and to make it the height of your ambition to get a player for your mistress.

Rho. [*embracing* MELANTHA.] O dear young bully, thou hast tickled him with a *repartee*, i' faith.

Mel. You are one of those that applaud our country plays, where drums, and trumpets, and blood, and wounds, are wit.

Rho. Again, my boy? Let me kiss thee most abundantly.

Dor. You are an admirer of the dull French poetry, which is so thin, that it is the very leaf-gold of wit, the very wafers and whipped cream of sense, for which a man opens his mouth, and gapes, to swallow nothing: And to be an admirer of such profound dulness, one must be endowed with a great perfection of impudence and ignorance.

Pala. Let me embrace thee most vehemently.

Mel. I 'll sacrifice my life for French poetry.

[*Advancing.*

Dor. I 'll die upon the spot for our country wit.

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Rho. [*to* MELANTHA.] Hold, hold, young Mars! Palamede, draw back your hero.

Pala. 'Tis time; I shall be drawn in for a second else at the wrong weapon.

Mel. O that I were a man, for thy sake!

Dor. You 'll be a man as soon as I shall.

Enter a Messenger to RHODOPHIL.

Mess. Sir, the king has instant business with you;
I saw the guard drawn up by your lieutenant,
Before the palace-gate, ready to march.

Rho. 'Tis somewhat sudden; say that I am coming. [*Exit Messenger.*
Now, Palamede, what think you of this sport?
This is some sudden tumult; will you along?

Pala. Yes, yes, I will go; but the devil take me if ever I was less in humour. Why the pox could they not have stayed their tumult, till to-morrow? Then I had done my business, and been ready for them. Truth is, I had a little transitory crime to have committed first; and I am the worst man in the world at repenting, till a sin be thoroughly done: But what shall we do with the two boys?

Rho. Let them take a lodging in the house, 'till the business be over.

Dor. What, lie with a boy? For my part, I own it, I cannot endure to lie with a boy.

Pala. The more 's my sorrow, I cannot accommodate you with a better bedfellow.

Mel. Let me die, if I enter into a pair of sheets with him that hates the French.

Dor. Pish, take no care for us, but leave us in the streets; I warrant you, as late as it is, I 'll find my lodging as well as any drunken bully of them all.

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Rho. I 'll fight in mere revenge, and wreak my passion,
On all that spoil this hopeful assignation. [*Aside.*
Pala. I 'm sure we fight in a good quarrel:
Rogues may pretend religion, and the laws;
But a kind mistress is the Good Old Cause.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Enter PALMYRA, EUBULUS, *and* HERMOGENES.

Palm. You tell me wonders; that Leonidas
Is prince Theagenes, the late king's son.
Eub. It seems as strange to him, as now to you,
Before I had convinced him; but, besides
His great resemblance to the king his father,
The queen his mother lives, secured by me
In a religious house, to whom, each year,
I brought the news of his increasing virtues.
My last long absence from you both was caused
By wounds, which in my journey I received,
When set upon by thieves; I lost those jewels
And letters, which your dying mother left.
Herm. The same he means, which, since, brought to the king,
Made him first know he had a child alive:
'Twas then my care of prince Leonidas,
Caused me to say he was the usurper's son;
Till after, forced by your apparent danger,
I made the true discovery of your birth,
And once more hid my prince's.

Enter LEONIDAS.

Leon. Hermogenes, and Eubulus, retire;
Those of our party, whom I left without,
Expect your aid and counsel.
[*Exeunt* HERM. *and* EUB.

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Palm. I should, Leonidas, congratulate
This happy change of your exalted fate;
But, as my joy, so you my wonder move.
Your looks have more of business than of love;
And your last words some great design did show.
Leon. I frame not any to be hid from you;
You, in my love, all my designs may see.
But what have love and you designed for me?
Fortune, once more, has set the balance right;
First, equalled us in lowness; then, in height.
Both of us have so long, like gamesters, thrown,
Till fate comes round, and gives to each his own.
As fate is equal, so may love appear:
Tell me, at least, what I must hope, or fear.
Palm. After so many proofs, how can you call
My love in doubt? Fear nothing, and hope all.
Think what a prince, with honour, may receive,
Or I may give, without a parent's leave.
Leon. You give, and then restrain the grace you show;
As ostentatious priests, when souls they woo,
Promise their heaven to all, but grant to few.
But do for me, what I have dared for you:
I did no argument from duty bring:
Duty 's a name, and love 's a real thing.
Palm. Man's love may, like wild torrents, overflow;
Woman's as deep, but in its banks must go.
My love is mine, and that I can impart;
But cannot give my person, with my heart.
Leon. Your love is then no gift:
For, when the person it does not convey,
'Tis to give gold, and not to give the key.
Palm. Then ask my father.
Leon. He detains my throne;
Who holds back mine, will hardly give his own.
Palm. What then remains?

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Leon. That I must have recourse
To arms, and take my love and crown, by force.
Hermogenes is forming the design;
And with him all the brave and loyal join.
Palm. And is it thus you court Palmyra's bed?
Can she the murderer of her parent wed?
Desist from force: So much you well may give
To love, and me, to let my father live.
Leon. Each act of mine my love to you has shown;
But you, who tax my want of it, have none.
You bid me part with you, and let him live;
But they should nothing ask, who nothing give.
Palm. I give what virtue, and what duty can,
In vowing ne'er to wed another man.
Leon. You will be forced to be Argaleon's wife.
Palm. I 'll keep my promise, though I lose my life.
Leon. Then you lose love, for which we both contend;
For life is but the means, but love 's the end.
Palm. Our souls shall love hereafter.
Leon. I much fear,
That soul, which could deny the body here
To taste of love, would be a niggard there.
Palm. Then 'tis past hope: our cruel fate, I see,
Will make a sad divorce 'twixt you and me.
For, if you force employ, by heaven I swear,
And all blessed beings,——
Leon. Your rash oath forbear.
Palm. I never——
Leon. Hold once more. But yet, as he,
Who 'scapes a dangerous leap, looks back to see;
So I desire, now I am past my fear,
To know what was that oath you meant to swear.

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Palm. I meant, that if you hazarded your life,
Or sought my father's, ne'er to be your wife.
Leon. See now, Palmyra, how unkind you prove!
Could you, with so much ease, forswear my love?
Palm. You force me with your ruinous design.
Leon. Your father's life is more your care, than mine.
Palm. You wrong me: 'Tis not, though it ought to be;
You are my care, heaven knows, as well as he.
Leon. If now the execution I delay,
My honour, and my subjects, I betray.
All is prepared for the just enterprise;
And the whole city will to-morrow rise.
The leaders of the party are within,
And Eubulus has sworn that he will bring,
To head their arms, the person of their king.
Palm. In telling this, you may be guilty too;
I therefore must discover what I know:
What honour bids you do, nature bids me prevent;
But kill me first, and then pursue your black intent.
Leon. Palmyra, no; you shall not need to die;
Yet I 'll not trust so strict a piety.
Within there!

Enter EUBULUS.

Eubulus, a guard prepare;
Here, I commit this prisoner to your care.
[*Kisses* PALMYRA'S *hand, then gives it to* EUBULUS.
Palm. Leonidas, I never thought these bands
Could e'er be given me by a lover's hands.

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Leon. Palmyra, thus your judge himself arraigns; [*Kneeling.*
He, who imposed these bands, still wears your chains:
When you to love or duty false must be,
Or to your father guilty, or to me,
These chains, alone, remain to set you free.
[*Noise of swords clashing.*

Poly. [*within.*] Secure these, first: then search the inner room.

Leon. From whence do these tumultuous clamours come?

Enter HERMOGENES, *hastily.*

Herm. We are betrayed; and there remains alone
This comfort, that your person is not known.

Enter the King, ARGALEON, RHODOPHIL, PALAMEDE, *Guards; some like citizens, as prisoners.*

Poly. What mean these midnight cousultations here,
Where I like an unsummoned guest appear?

Leon. Sir——

Arga. There needs no excuse; 'tis understood;
You were all watching for your prince's good.

Poly. My reverend city friends, you are well met!
On what great work were your grave wisdoms set?
Which of my actions were you scanning here?
What French invasion have you found to fear?

Leon. They are my friends; and come, sir, with intent,
To take their leaves, before my banishment.

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Poly. Your exile in both sexes friends can find:
I see the ladies, like the men, are kind.
[*Seeing* PALMYRA.
Palm. Alas, I came but—— [*Kneeling.*
Poly. Add not to your crime
A lie: I 'll hear you speak some other time.
How? Eubulus! nor time, nor thy disguise,
Can keep thee undiscovered from my eyes.
A guard there! seize them all.
Rho. Yield, sir; what use of valour can be shown?
Pala. One, and unarmed, against a multitude?
Leon. Oh for a sword!
[*He reaches at one of the Guards' halberds, and is seized behind.*
I wonnot lose my breath
In fruitless prayers; but beg a speedy death.
Palm. O spare Leonidas, and punish me!
Poly. Mean girl, thou want'st an advocate for thee.
Now the mysterious knot will be untied;
Whether the young king lives, or where he died:
To-morrow's dawn shall the dark riddle clear,
Crown all my joys, and dissipate my fear.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

PALAMEDE, STRATO. PALAMEDE *with a letter in his hand.*

Pala. This evening, sayest thou? will they both be here?
Stra. Yes, sir, both my old master, and your mistress's father. The old gentlemen ride hard this journey; they say, it shall be the last time

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they will see the town; and both of them are so pleased with this marriage, which they have concluded for you, that I am afraid they will live some years longer to trouble you, with the joy of it.

Pala. But this is such an unreasonable thing, to impose upon me to be married to-morrow; 'tis hurrying a man to execution, without giving him time to say his prayers.

Stra. Yet, if I might advise you, sir, you should not delay it; for your younger brother comes up with them, and is got already into their favours. He has gained much upon my old master, by finding fault with innkeepers' bills, and by starving us, and our horses, to show his frugality; and he is very well with your mistress's father, by giving him recipes for the spleen, gout and scurvy, and other infirmities of old age.

Pala. I 'll rout him, and his country education: Pox on him, I remember him before I travelled, he had nothing in him but mere jockey; used to talk loud, and make matches, and was all for the crack of the field: Sense and wit were as much banished from his discourse, as they are when the court goes out of town to a horse race. Go now and provide your master's lodgings.

Stra. I go, sir. [*Exit.*

Pala. It vexes me to the heart, to leave all my designs with Doralice unfinished; to have flown her so often to a mark, and still to be bobbed at retrieve:* If I had once enjoyed her, though I could not have satisfied my stomach

* [To "fly to a mark" is in falconry = "to mark down:" "bobbed" = cheated, disappointed.—Ed.]

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with the feast, at least I should have relished my mouth a little; but now——

Enter PHILOTIS.

Phil. Oh, sir, you are happily met; I was coming to find you.

Pala. From your lady, I hope.

Phil. Partly from her; but more especially from myself: She has just now received a letter from her father, with an absolute command to dispose herself to marry you to-morrow.

Pala. And she takes it to the death?

Phil. Quite contrary: The letter could never have come in a more lucky minute; for it found her in an ill-humour with a rival of yours, that shall be nameless, about the pronunciation of a French word.

Pala. Count Rhodophil? never disguise it, I know the amour: But I hope you took the occasion to strike in for me?

Phil. It was my good fortune to do you some small service in it: for your sake I discommended him all over,—clothes, person, humour, behaviour, everything; and, to sum up all, told her, it was impossible to find a married man that was otherwise; for they were all so mortified at home with their wives' ill humours, that they could never recover themselves to be company abroad.

Pala. Most divinely urged!

Phil. Then I took occasion to commend your good qualities; as the sweetness of your humour, the comeliness of your person, your good mien, your valour; but, above all, your liberality.

Pala. I vow to Gad I had like to have forgot that good quality in myself, if thou hadst not remembered me of it: Here are five pieces for thee.

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Phil. Lord, you have the softest hand, sir, it would do a woman good to touch it: Count Rhodophil's is not half so soft; for I remember I felt it once, when he gave me ten pieces for my new-year's-gift.

Pala. O, I understand you, madam; you shall find my hand as soft again as Count Rhodophil's: There are twenty pieces for you. The former was but a retaining fee; now I hope you 'll plead for me.

Phil. Your own merits speak enough. Be sure only to ply her with French words, and I 'll warrant you 'll do your business. Here are a list of her phrases for this day: Use them to her upon all occasions, and foil her at her own weapon; for she 's like one of the old Amazons, she 'll never marry, except it be the man who has first conquered her.

Pala. I 'll be sure to follow your advice: But you 'll forget to further my design.

Phil. What, do you think I 'll be ungrateful? —But, however, if you distrust my memory, put some token on my finger to remember it by: That diamond there would do admirably.

Pala. There 'tis; and I ask your pardon heartily for calling your memory into question: I assure you I 'll trust it another time, without putting you to the trouble of another token.

Enter PALMYRA *and* ARTEMIS.

Art. Madam, this way the prisoners are to pass; Here you may see Leonidas.

Palm. Then here I 'll stay, and follow him to death.

Enter MELANTHA, *hastily.*

Mel. O, here 's her highness! Now is my time to introduce myself, and to make my court to

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her, in my new French phrases. Stay, let me read my catalogue—*Suite, figure, chagrin, naïveté,* and *let me die,* for the parenthesis of all.

Pala. [*Aside.*] Do, persecute her; and I 'll persecute thee as fast in thy own dialect.

Mel. Madam, the princess! let me die, but this is a most horrid spectacle, to see a person who makes so grand a figure in the court, without the *suite* of a princess, and entertaining your *chagrin* all alone:—*Naïveté* should have been there, but the disobedient word would not come in. [*Aside.*

Palm. What is she, Artemis?

Art. An impertinent lady, madam; very ambitious of being known to your highness.

Pala. [*To* MELANTHA.] Let me die, madam, if I have not waited you here these two long hours, without so much as the *suite* of a single servant to attend me: entertaining myself with my own *chagrin,* till I had the honour of seeing your ladyship, who are a person that makes so considerable a figure in the court.

Mel. Truce with your *douceurs,* good servant; you see I am addressing to the princess; pray do not *embarrass* me—*Embarrass* me! what a delicious French word do you make me lose upon you too! [*To the Princess.*] Your highness, madam, will please to pardon the *bévue* which I made, in not sooner finding you out to be a princess: But let me die if this *éclaircissement,* which is made this day of your quality, does not ravish me; and give me leave to tell you——

Pala. But first give me leave to tell you, madam, that I have so great a *tendre* for your person, and such a *penchant* to do you service, that——

Mel. What, must I still be troubled with your

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sottises? (There 's another word lost, that I meant for the princess, with a mischief to you!) But your highness, madam——

Pala. But your ladyship, madam——

Enter LEONIDAS, *guarded and led over the stage.*

Mel. Out upon him, how he looks, madam! now he 's found no prince, he is the strangest figure of a man; how could I make that *coup d'étourdi* to think him one?

Palm. Away, impertinent!—my dear Leonidas!

Leon. My dear Palmyra!

Palm. Death shall never part us; my destiny is yours. [*He is led off, she follows.*

Mel. Impertinent! Oh, I am the most unfortunate person this day breathing: That the princess should thus *rompre en visière*, without occasion. Let me die, but I 'll follow her to death, till I make my peace.

Pala. [*Holding her.*] And let me die, but I 'll follow you to the infernals, till you pity me.

Mel. [*Turning towards him angrily.*] Ay, 'tis long of you that this *malheur* is fallen upon me; your impertinence has put me out of the good graces of the princess, and all that, which has ruined me, and all that, and, therefore, let me die, but I 'll be revenged, and all that.

Pala. Façon, façon, you must and shall love me, and all that; for my old man is coming up, and all that; and I am *désespéré au dernier*, and will not be disinherited, and all that.

Mel. How durst you interrupt me so *mal à propos*, when you knew I was addressing to the princess?

Pala. But why would you address yourself so much *à contretemps* then?

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Mel. Ah, *mal peste!*

Pala. Ah, *j'enrage!*

Phil. *Radoucissez vous, de grâce, madame; vous êtes bien en colère pour peu de chose. Vous n'entendez pas la raillerie galante.*

Mel. *A d'autres, à d'autres:* He mocks himself of me,* he abuses me: Ah me unfortunate! [*Cries.*

Phil. You mistake him, madam, he does but accommodate his phrase to your refined language. *Ah qu'il est un cavalier accompli!* Pursue your point, sir—— [*To him.*

Pala. *Ah qu'il fait beau dans ces bocages;*† [Singing.] *Ah que le ciel donne un beau jour!* There I was with you, with a *minuet.*

Mel. Let me die now, but this singing is fine, and extremely French in him: [*Laughs.*] But then, that he should use my own words, as it were in contempt of me, I cannot bear it. [*Crying.*

Pala. *Ces beaux séjours, ces doux ramages——* [Singing.

Mel. *Ces beaux séjours, ces doux ramages.* [Singing after him.] *Ces beaux séjours nous invitent à l'amour!* Let me die, but he sings *en cavalier,* and so humours the cadence! [*Laughing.*

Pala. *Vois, ma Climène, vois sous ce chêne.* [Sing-

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* *He mocks himself of me.*] Melantha, like some modern coxcombs, uses the idiom as well as the words of the French language.

† [This is a real French song of the period. It is to be found in Wekerlin's *Echos du Temps passé,* II. 42. It should read, "Ce beau séjour nous invite à l'amour." But Dryden no doubt took it, as well as *Vois ma Climène* (*Voy* in original, which appears in Scott as *Foy*) from the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme,* v. 7, cinquième entrée. *Toute la terre* I have not yet traced.—Ed.]

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ing again.] *S' entrebaiser ces oiseaux amoureux!* Let me die now, but that was fine. Ah, now, for three or four brisk Frenchmen, to be put into masking habits, and to sing it on a theatre, how witty it would be! and then to dance helter skelter to a *chanson à boire: Toute la terre, toute la terre est à moi!* What's matter though it were made and sung two or three years ago in *cabarets*, how it would attract the admiration, especially of every one that's an *éveillé!*

Mel. Well; I begin to have a *tendre* for you; but yet, upon condition, that—when we are married, you—— [PAL. *sings, while she speaks.*

Phil. You must drown her voice: If she makes her French conditions, you are a slave for ever.

Mel. First, you will engage—that——

Pala. Fa, la, la, la, etc. [*Louder.*

Mel. Will you hear the conditions?

Pala. No; I will hear no conditions! I am resolved to win you *en Français:* To be very airy, with abundance of noise, and no sense: Fa la, la, la, etc.

Mel. Hold, hold; I am vanquished with your *gaité d'esprit.* I am yours, and will be yours, *sans nulle reserve, ni condition:* And let me die, if I do not think myself the happiest nymph in Sicily——My dear French dear, stay but a *minute,* till I *raccommode* myself with the princess; and then I am yours, *jusqu'à la mort. Allons donc.*—— [Exeunt MEL. PHIL.

Pala. [*Solus, fanning himself with his hat.*] I never thought before that wooing was so laborious an exercise; if she were worth a million, I have deserved her; and now, methinks too, with taking all this pains for her, I begin to like her. 'Tis so; I have known many, who never cared for hare nor partridge, but those they

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caught themselves would eat heartily: The pains, and the story a man tells of the taking them, makes the meat go down more pleasantly. Besides, last night I had a sweet dream of her, and, gad, she I have once dreamed of, I am stark mad till I enjoy her, let her be never so ugly.

Enter DORALICE.

Dor. Who 's that you are so mad to enjoy, Palamede?

Pala. You may easily imagine that, sweet Doralice.

Dor. More easily than you think I can: I met just now with a certain man, who came to you with letters from a certain old gentleman, y'cleped your father; whereby I am given to understand, that to-morrow you are to take an oath in the church to be grave henceforward, to go ill-dressed and slovenly, to get heirs for your estate, and to dandle them for your diversion; and, in short, that love and courtship are to be no more.

Pala. Now have I so much shame to be thus apprehended in the manner, that I can neither speak nor look upon you; I have abundance of grace in me, that I find: But if you have any spark of true friendship in you, retire with me a little into the next room, that hath a couch or bed in it, and bestow your charity upon a dying man! A little comfort from a mistress, before a man is going to give himself in marriage, is as good as a lusty dose of strong-water to a dying malefactor: it takes away the sense of hell and hanging from him.

Dor. No, good Palamede, I must not be so injurious to your bride: 'Tis ill drawing from the

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bank to-day, when all your ready money is payable to-morrow.

Pala. A wife is only to have the ripe fruit, that falls of itself; but a wise man will always preserve a shaking for a mistress.

Dor. But a wife for the first quarter is a mistress.

Pala. But when the second comes——

Dor. When it does come, you are so given to variety, that you would make a wife of me in another quarter.

Pala. No, never, except I were married to you: married people can never oblige one another; for all they do is duty, and consequently there can be no thanks: But love is more frank and generous than he is honest; he 's a liberal giver, but a cursed pay-master.

Dor. I declare I will have no gallant; but, if I would, he should never be a married man; a married man is but a mistress's half-servant, as a clergyman is but the king's half-subject. For a man to come to me that smells of the wife! 'Slife, I would as soon wear her old gown after her, as her husband.

Pala. Yet 'tis a kind of fashion to wear a princess's cast shoes; you see the country ladies buy them, to be fine in them.

Dor. Yes, a princess's shoes may be worn after her, because they keep their fashion, by being so very little used; but generally a married man is the creature of the world the most out of fashion: his behaviour is dumpish; his discourse, his wife and family; his habit so much neglected, it looks as if that were married too; his hat is married, his peruke is married, his breeches are married,—and, if we could look within his breeches, we should find him married there too.

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Pala. Am I then to be discarded for ever? pray do but mark how that word sounds; for ever! it has a very damn'd sound, Doralice.

Dor. Ay, for ever! it sounds as hellishly to me, as it can do to you, but there 's no help for it.

Pala. Yet, if we had but once enjoyed one another!—but then once only, is worse than not at all: It leaves a man with such a lingering after it.

Dor. For aught I know, 'tis better that we have not; we might upon trial have liked each other less, as many a man and woman, that have loved as desperately as we, and yet, when they came to possession, have sighed and cried to themselves, Is this all?

Pala. That is only, if the servant were not found a man of this world; but if, upon trial, we had not liked each other, we had certainly left loving; and faith, that 's the greater happiness of the two.

Dor. 'Tis better as 'tis; we have drawn off already as much of our love as would run clear; after possessing, the rest is but jealousies, and disquiets, and quarrelling and piecing.

Pala. Nay, after one great quarrel, there 's never any sound piecing; the love is apt to break in the same place again.

Dor. I declare I would never renew a love; that 's like him, who trims an old coach for ten years together; he might buy a new one better cheap.

Pala. Well, madam, I am convinced, that 'tis best for us not to have enjoyed; but, gad, the strongest reason is, because I can't help it.

Dor. The only way to keep us new to one another, is never to enjoy, as they keep grapes,

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by hanging them upon a line; they must touch nothing, if you would preserve them fresh.

Pala. But then they wither, and grow dry in the very keeping; however, I shall have a warmth for you, and an eagerness, every time I see you; and, if I chance to outlive Melantha——

Dor. And if I chance to outlive Rhodophil——

Pala. Well, I 'll cherish my body as much as I can, upon that hope. 'Tis true, I would not directly murder the wife of my bosom; but, to kill her civilly, by the way of kindness, I 'll put as fair as another man: I 'll begin to-morrow night, and be very wrathful with her; that 's resolved on.

Dor. Well, Palamede, here 's my hand, I 'll venture to be your second wife, for all your threatenings.

Pala. In the meantime I 'll watch you hourly, as I would the ripeness of a melon; and I hope you 'll give me leave now and then to look on you, and to see if you are not ready to be cut yet.

Dor. No, no, that must not be, Palamede, for fear the gardener should come and catch you taking up the glass.

Enter RHODOPHIL.

Rho. [*Aside.*] Billing so sweetly! now I am confirmed in my suspicions; I must put an end to this ere it go further——[*To* DORALICE.] Cry you mercy, spouse, I fear I have interrupted your recreations.

Dor. What recreations?

Rho. Nay, no excuses, good spouse; I saw fair hand conveyed to lip, and prest, as though you had been squeezing soft wax together for an in-

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denture. Palamede, you and I must clear this reckoning: why would you have seduced my wife?

Pala. Why would you have debauched my mistress?

Rho. What do you think of that civil couple, that played at a game, called Hide and Seek, last evening, in the grotto?

Pala. What do you think of that innocent pair, who made it their pretence to seek for others, but came, indeed, to hide themselves there?

Rho. All things considered, I begin vehemently to suspect, that the young gentleman I found in your company last night, was a certain youth of my acquaintance.

Pala. And I have an odd imagination, that you could never have suspected my small gallant, if your little villainous Frenchman had not been a false brother.

Rho. Further arguments are needless; draw off; I shall speak to you now by the way of *bilbo.* [*Claps his hand to his sword.*

Pala. And I shall answer you by the way of Dangerfield.* [*Claps his hands on his.*

Dor. Hold, hold; are not you two a couple of mad fighting fools, to cut one another's throats for nothing?

Pala. How for nothing? He courts the woman I must marry.

Rho. And he courts you, whom I have married.

Dor. But you can neither of you be jealous of what you love not.

---

* *Dangerfield.*] A dramatic bully, whose sword and habit became proverbial. "This gentleman, appearing with his mustaccios, according to the Turkish manner, Cordubee hat, and strange out-of-the-way clothes, just as if one had been dressed up to act Captain Dangerfield in the play," etc. *Life of Sir Dudley North.*

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Rho. Faith, I am jealous, and this makes me partly suspect that I love you better than I thought.

Dor. Pish! a mere jealousy of honour.

Rho. Gad, I am afraid there's something else in 't; for Palamede has wit, and, if he loves you, there 's something more in ye than I have found: Some rich mine, for aught I know, that I have not yet discovered.

Pala. 'Slife, what 's this? Here 's an argument for me to love Melantha; for he has loved her, and he has wit too, and, for aught I know, there may be a mine; but, if there be, I am resolved I 'll dig for it.

Dor. [*To* RHODOPHIL.] Then I have found my account in raising your jealousy. O! 'tis the most delicate sharp sauce to a cloyed stomach; it will give you a new edge, Rhodophil.

Rho. And a new point too, Doralice, if I could be sure thou art honest.

Dor. If you are wise, believe me for your own sake: Love and religion have but one thing to trust to; that 's a good sound faith. Consider, if I have played false, you can never find it out by any experiment you can make upon me.

Rho. No? Why, suppose I had a delicate screwed * gun; if I left her clean, and found her foul, I should discover, to my cost, she had been shot in.

Dor. But if you left her clean, and found her only rusty, you would discover, to your shame, she was only so for want of shooting.

Pala. Rhodophil, you know me too well to imagine I speak for fear; and therefore, in consideration of our past friendship, I will tell you,

* ["Screwed" is possible, but "scoured" may be suspected. —ED.]

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and bind it by all things holy, that Doralice is innocent.

Rho. Friend, I will believe you, and vow the same for your Melantha; but the devil on 't is, how shall we keep them so?

Pala. What dost think of a blessed community betwixt us four, for the solace of the women, and relief of the men? Methinks it would be a pleasant kind of life: Wife and husband for the standing dish, and mistress and gallant for the dessert.

Rho. But suppose the wife and mistress should both long for the standing dish, how should they be satisfied together?

Pala. In such a case they must draw lots; and yet that would not do neither, for they would both be wishing for the longest cut.

Rho. Then I think, Palamede, we had as good make a firm league, not to invade each other's propriety.*

Pala. Content, say I. From henceforth let all acts of hostility cease betwixt us; and that, in the usual form of treaties, as well by sea as land, and in all fresh waters.

Dor. I will add but one *proviso*, that whoever breaks the league, either by war abroad, or neglect at home, both the women shall revenge themselves by the help of the other party.

Rho. That 's but reasonable. Come away, Doralice; I have a great temptation to be sealing articles in private.

Pala. Hast thou so?

[*Claps him on the shoulder.*

"Fall on Macduff,
And cursed be he that first cries, Hold, enough."

* [Obviously = "property."—Ed.]

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Enter POLYDAMAS, PALMYRA, ARTEMIS, ARGALEON: *After them* EUBULUS *and* HERMOGENES, *guarded.*

Palm. Sir, on my knees I beg you——
Poly. Away, I 'll hear no more.
Palm. For my dead mother's sake; you say you loved her,
And tell me I resemble her. Thus she
Had begged.
Poly. And thus I had denied her.
Palm. You must be merciful.
Arga. You must be constant.
Poly. Go, bear them to the torture; you have boasted
You have a king to head you; I would know
To whom I must resign.
Eub. This is our recompence
For serving thy dead queen.
Herm. And education
Of thy daughter.
Arga. You are too modest, in not naming all
His obligations to you: Why did you
Omit his son, the prince Leonidas?
Poly. That imposture
I had forgot; their tortures shall be doubled.
Herm. You please me; I shall die the sooner.
Eub. No; could I live an age, and still be racked,
I still would keep the secret.
[*As they are going off.*

Enter LEONIDAS, *guarded.*

Leon. O, whither do you hurry innocence!
If you have any justice, spare their lives;
Or, if I cannot make you just, at least
I 'll teach you to more purpose to be cruel.

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Palm. Alas, what does he seek!
Leon. Make me the object of your hate and vengeance!
Are these decrepid bodies, worn to ruin,
Just ready of themselves to fall asunder,
And to let drop the soul,—
Are these fit subjects for a rack and tortures?
Where would you fasten any hold upon them?
Place pains on me,—united fix them here,—
I have both youth, and strength, and soul to bear them;
And, if they merit death, then I much more,
Since 'tis for me they suffer.
Herm. Heaven forbid
We should redeem our pains, or worthless lives,
By our exposing yours.
Eub. Away with us. Farewell, sir:
I only suffer in my fears for you.
Arga. So much concerned for him! Then my
[*Aside.*
Suspicion 's true. [*Whispers the King.*
Palm. Hear yet my last request for poor Leonidas,
Or take my life with his.
Arga. Rest satisfied, Leonidas is he.
[*To the King.*
Poly. I am amazed: What must be done?
Arga. Command his execution instantly:
Give him not leisure to discover it;
He may corrupt the soldiers.
Poly. Hence with that traitor, bear him to his death:
Haste there, and see my will performed.
Leon. Nay, then, I 'll die like him the gods have made me.
Hold, gentlemen, I am——
[ARGALEON *stops his mouth.*

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Arga. Thou art a traitor; 'tis not fit to hear thee.

Leon. I say, I am the——[*Getting loose a little.*

Arga. So; gag him, and lead him off.

[*Again stopping his mouth.*

LEONIDAS, HERMOGENES, EUBULUS, *led off;* POLYDAMAS *and* ARGALEON *follow.*

Palm. Duty and love, by turns, possess my soul,
And struggle for a fatal victory.
I will discover he 's the king:—Ah, no!
That will perhaps save him;
But then I 'm guilty of a father's ruin.
What shall I do, or not do? Either way
I must destroy a parent, or a lover.
Break heart; for that 's the least of ills to me,
And death the only cure. [*Swoons.*

Arte. Help, help the princess.

Rho. Bear her gently hence, where she may
Have more succour.

[*She is borne off;* ARTE. *follows her.*

[*Shouts within, and clashing of swords.*

Pala. What noise is that?

Enter AMALTHEA, *running.*

Amal. Oh, gentlemen, if you have loyalty,
Or courage, show it now! Leonidas,
Broke on the sudden from his guards, and snatching
A sword from one, his back against the scaffold,
Bravely defends himself, and owns aloud
He is our long-lost king; found for this moment,
But, if your valour helps not, lost for ever.
Two of his guards, moved by the sense of virtue,
Are turned for him, and there they stand at bay,
Against an host of foes.

Rho. Madam, no more;

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We lose time; my command, or my example,
May move the soldiers to the better cause.
You 'll second me? [*To* PALA.

Pala. Or die with you: No subject e'er can meet
A nobler fate, than at his sovereign's feet.
[*Exeunt.*

[*Clashing of swords within, and shouts.*

Enter LEONIDAS, RHODOPHIL, PALAMEDE, EUBULUS, HERMOGENES, *and their Party, victorious;* POLYDAMAS *and* ARGALEON, *disarmed.*

Leon. That I survive the dangers of the day,
Next to the gods, brave friends, be yours the honour;
And, let heaven witness for me, that my joy
Is not more great for this my right restored,
Than 'tis, that I have power to recompense
Your loyalty and valour. Let mean princes,
Of abject souls, fear to reward great actions;
I mean to show,
That whatsoe'er subjects, like you, dare merit,
A king, like me, dares give.

Rho. You make us blush, we have deserved so little.

Pala. And yet instruct us how to merit more.

Leon. And as I would be just in my rewards,
So should I in my punishments; these two,
This, the usurper of my crown, the other,
Of my Palmyra's love, deserve that death,
Which both designed for me.

Poly. And we expect it.

Arga. I have too long been happy, to live wretched.

Poly. And I too long have governed, to desire
A life without an empire.

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Leon. You are Palmyra's father; and as such,
Though not a king, shall have obedience paid
From him who is one. Father, in that name
All injuries forgot, and duty owned.
[*Embraces him.*

Poly. O, had I known you could have been this king,
Thus god-like, great and good, I should have wished
To have been dethroned before. 'Tis now I live,
And more than reign; now all my joys flow pure,
Unmixed with cares, and undisturbed by conscience.

Enter PALMYRA, AMALTHEA, ARTEMIS, DORALICE, *and* MELANTHA.

Leon. See, my Palmyra comes! the frighted blood
Scarce yet recalled to her pale cheeks,
Like the first streaks of light broke loose from darkness,
And dawning into blushes.—Sir, you said
[*To* POLY.
Your joys were full; Oh, would you make mine so!
I am but half restored without this blessing.

Poly. The gods, and my Palmyra, make you happy,
As you make me! [*Gives her hand to* LEONIDAS.

Palm. Now all my prayers are heard:
I may be dutiful, and yet may love.
Virtue and patience have at length unravelled
The knots, which fortune tied.

Mel. Let me die, but I'll congratulate his majesty: How admirably well his royalty becomes him! Becomes! that is *lui sied*, but our damned language expresses nothing.

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Pala. How? Does it become him already? 'Twas but just now you said, he was such a figure of a man.

Mel. True, my dear, when he was a private man he was a figure; but since he is a king, methinks he has assumed another figure: He looks so grand, and so august! [*Going to the King.*

Pala. Stay, stay; I 'll present you when it is more convenient. I find I must get her a place at court; and when she is once there, she can be no longer ridiculous; for she is young enough, and pretty enough, and fool enough, and French enough, to bring up a fashion there to be affected.

Leon. [*To* RHODOPHIL.] Did she then lead you to this brave attempt?
[*To* AMALTHEA.] To you, fair Amalthea, what I am,
And what all these, from me, we jointly owe:
First, therefore, to your great desert we give
Your brother's life; but keep him under guard
Till our new power be settled. What more grace
He may receive, shall from his future carriage
Be given, as he deserves.

Arga. I neither now desire, nor will deserve it;
My loss is such as cannot be repaired,
And, to the wretched, life can be no mercy.

Leon. Then be a prisoner always: Thy ill fate
And pride will have it so: But since in this I cannot,
Instruct me, generous Amalthea, how
A king may serve you.

Amal. I have all I hope,
And all I now must wish; I see you happy.
Those hours I have to live, which heaven in pity
Will make but few, I vow to spend with vestals:
The greatest part in prayers for you; the rest
In mourning my unworthiness.

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Press me not further to explain myself;
'Twill not become me, and may cause your trouble.

Leon. Too well I understand her secret grief,
[*Aside.*
But dare not seem to know it.—Come, my fairest;
[*To* PALMYRA.
Beyond my crown I have one joy in store,
To give that crown to her whom I adore.
[*Exeunt.*

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EPILOGUE.*

THUS have my spouse and I informed the nation,
And led you all the way to reformation;
Not with dull morals, gravely writ, like those,
Which men of easy phlegm with care compose,—
Your poets, of stiff words and limber sense,
Born on the confines of indifference;
But by examples drawn, I dare to say,
From most of you who hear and see the play.
There are more Rhodophils in this theatre,
More Palamedes, and some few wives, I fear:
But yet too far our poet would not run;
Though 'twas well offered, there was nothing done,
He would not quite the women's frailty bare,
But stript them to the waist, and left them there:
And the men's faults are less severely shown,
For he considers that himself is one.—
Some stabbing wits, to bloody satire bent,
Would treat both sexes with less compliment;
Would lay the scene at home; of husbands tell,
For wenches taking up their wives i' the Mall;
And a brisk bout, which each of them did want,
Made by mistake of mistress and gallant.
Our modest author thought it was enough
To cut you off a sample of the stuff:
He spared my shame, which you, I 'm sure, would not,
For you were all for driving on the plot:
You sighed when I came in to break the sport,
And set your teeth when each design fell short.
To wives and servants all good wishes lend,
But the poor cuckold seldom finds a friend.
Since, therefore, court and town will take no pity,
I humbly cast myself upon the city.

---

* [Spoken by Rhodophil.—ED.]

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THE

ASSIGNATION;

OR,

LOVE IN A NUNNERY.

A COMEDY.

Successum dea dira negat—— VIRG.

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THE ASSIGNATION.

This play was unfortunate in the representation. It is needless, at the distance of more than a century, to investigate the grounds of the dislike of an audience, who, perhaps, could at the very time have given no good reason for their capricious condemnation of a play, not worse than many others which they received with applause. The author, in the dedication, hints at the "lameness of the action;" but, as the poet and performers are nearly equally involved in the disgrace of a condemned piece, it is a very natural desire on either side to assign the cause of its failure to the imperfections of the other; of which there is a ludicrous representation in a dialogue betwixt the player and the poet in "Joseph Andrews." Another cause of its unfavourable reception seems to have been its second title of "Love in a Nunnery." Dryden certainly could, last of any man, have been justly suspected of an intention to ridicule the Duke of York and the Catholic religion; yet, as he fell under the same censure for the "Spanish Friar," it seems probable that such suspicions were actually entertained. The play certainly contains, in the present instance, nothing to justify them. In point of merit, "The Assignation" seems pretty much on a level with Dryden's other comedies; and certainly the spectators, who had received the blunders of Sir Martin Mar-all with such unbounded applause, might have taken some interest in those of poor Benito. Perhaps the absurd and vulgar scene, in which the prince pretends a fit of the colic, had some share in occasioning the fall of the piece. This inelegant *jeu de théâtre* is severely ridiculed in the "Rehearsal."

To one person, the damnation of this play seems to have afforded exquisite pleasure. This was Edward Ravenscroft, once a member of the Middle Temple,—an ingenious gentleman, of whose taste it may be held a satisfactory instance, that he deemed the tragedy of "Titus Andronicus" too mild for representation, and generously added a few more murders, rapes, and parricides, to that charnel-house of horrors.* His

* In the prologue to this beautified edition, Ravenscroft modestly tells us:

Like other poets, he 'll not proudly scorn
To own, that he but winnowed Shakespeare's corn:
So far was he from robbing him of's treasure,
That he did add his own to make full measure.

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turn for comedy being at least equal to his success in the blood-stained buskin, Mr. Ravenscroft translated and mangled several of the more farcical French comedies, which he decorated with the lustre of his own great name. Amongst others which he thus appropriated, were the most extravagant and buffoon scenes in Molière's "Bourgeois Gentilhomme;" in which Monsieur Jourdain is, with much absurd ceremony, created a Turkish Paladin; and where Molière took the opportunity to introduce an *entrée de ballet*, danced and sung by the Mufti, dervises, and others, in eastern habits. Ravenscroft's translation, entitled "The Citizen turned Gentleman," was acted in 1672, and printed in the same year; the jargon of the songs, like similar nonsense of our own day, seems to have been well received on the stage. Dryden, who was not always above feeling indignation at the bad taste and unjust preferences of the age, attacked Ravenscroft in the prologue to "The Assignation," as he had before, though less directly, in that of "Marriage à la Mode." Hence the exuberant and unrepressed joy of that miserable scribbler broke forth upon the damnation of Dryden's performance, in the following passage of a prologue to another of his pilfered performances, called "The Careless Lovers," acted, according to Langbaine, in the vacation succeeding the fall of "The Assignation," in 1673:

An author did, to please you, let his wit run,
Of late, much on a serving man and cittern;
And yet, you would not like the serenade,—
Nay, and you damned his nuns in masquerade:
You did his Spanish sing-song too abhor;
Ah! que locura con tanto rigor!
In fine, the whole by you so much was blamed,
To act their parts the players were ashamed.*
Ah, how severe your malice was that day!
To damn, at once, the poet and his play:†
But why was your rage just at that time shown,
When what the author writ was all his own?
Till then, he borrowed from romance, and did translate;‡
And those plays found a more indulgent fate.

* This looks as if there had been some ground for Dryden's censure upon the actors.

† A flat parody on the lines in Dryden's prologue, referring to Mamamouchi:

Grimace and habit sent you pleased away:
You damned the poet, but cried up the play.

‡ It is somewhat remarkable, that the censure contained in what is above printed like verses recoils upon the head of the author, who never wrote a single original performance. Langbaine, the persecutor of all plagiarism, though he did not know very well in what it consisted, threatens to "pull off Ravenscroft's disguise, and discover the politic plagiary that lurks under

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Ravenscroft, however, seems to have given the first offence; for, in the prologue to "The Citizen turned Gentleman," licensed 9th August 1672, we find the following lines obviously levelled at "The Conquest of Granada," and other heroic dramas of our author:

> Then shall the knight, that had a knock in 's cradle,
> Such as Sir Martin and Sir Arthur Addle, *
> Be flocked unto, as the great heroes now
> In plays of rhyme and noise, with wondrous show :—
> Then shall the house, to see these Hectors kill and slay,
> That bravely fight out the whole plot of the play,
> Be for at least six months full every day.

Langbaine, who quotes the lines from the prologue to Ravenscroft's "Careless Lovers," is of opinion, that he paid Dryden too great a compliment in admitting the originality of "The Assignation," and labours to show, that the characters are imitated from the "Roman Comique" of Scarron, and other novels of the time. But Langbaine seems to have been unable to comprehend, that originality consists in the mode of treating a subject more than in the subject itself.

"The Assignation" was acted in 1672, and printed in 1673.

[Scott's sentence on Langbaine is just and final, and must excuse me from noticing the idle and uncritical attempts of criticasters to indicate this and that source for the incidents of this and other plays. As however they may interest some readers, they will be inserted in the Appendix. The charge of plagiarism, as far as the *Roman Comique* is concerned, is simply preposterous. But I can hardly agree with Sir Walter that *The Assignation* is on a level with Dryden's other comedies. It seems to me to be the most flagrant example, except *Amboyna*, of his habit—an avowed habit—of dramatic "pot-boiling." Almost all the incidents are forced, the characters are feebly marked and hardly at all worked out, the dialogue is much below the level of *Marriage à la Mode* or *The Mock Astrologer*, and the song "Long between Love and Fear" is almost the only redeeming feature in the play,—nor is that up to the standard of the best of Dryden's songs.—Ed.]

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it. I know," continues the biographer, "he has endeavoured to show himself master of the art of swift writing, and would persuade the world that what he writes is *extempore* wit, and written *currente calamo*. But I doubt not to show, that though he would be thought to imitate the silkworm, that spins its web from its own bowels, yet I shall make him appear like the leech, that lives upon the blood of other men, drawn from the gums; and, when he is rubbed with salt, spews it up again."

* Sir Martin Mar-all we are acquainted with. Sir Arthur Addle is a similar character, in a play called "Sir Solomon, or, The Cautious Coxcomb," attributed to one John Caryll.

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TO

MY MOST HONOURED FRIEND,

SIR CHARLES SEDLEY, BART.*

SIR,

THE design of dedicating plays is as common and unjust, as that of desiring seconds in a duel.

* Sir Charles Sedley, noted among "the mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease," was so highly applauded for his taste and judgment, that Charles said, "Nature had given him a patent to be Apollo's viceroy." Some account has been given of this celebrated courtier in the introduction to the Essay on Dramatic Poetry. Dryden was at this time particularly induced to appeal to the taste of the first among the gay world, by the repeated censures which had been launched against him from the groves of Academe. Mr. Malone gives the titles of three pamphlets which had appeared against Dryden: 1. The Censure of the Rota, on Mr. Dryden's Conquest of Granada, printed at Oxford. 2. A Description of the Academy of the Athenian Virtuoso, with a discourse held there in vindication of Mr. Dryden's Conquest of Granada, against the Author of the Censure of the Rota. 3. A Friendly Vindication of Mr. Dryden, from the Author of the Censure of the Rota, printed at Cambridge. Thus assailed by the grave and the learned, censured for the irregularities of his gay patrons, which he countenanced although he did not partake, and stigmatized as a detractor

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It is engaging our friends, it may be, in a senseless quarrel, where they have much to venture, without any concernment of their own.* I have declared thus much beforehand, to prevent you from suspicion, that I intend to interest either your judgment or your kindness, in defending the errors of this comedy. It succeeded ill in the representation, against the opinion of many the best judges of our age, to whom you know I read it, ere it was presented publicly. Whether the fault was in the play itself, or in the lameness of the action, or in the number of its enemies, who came resolved to damn it for the title, I will not now dispute. That would be too like the little satisfaction which an unlucky

---

of his predecessors, and a defamer of classical learning, it was natural for Dryden to appeal to the most accomplished of those amongst whom he lived, and to whose taste he was but too strongly compelled to adapt his productions. Sedley, therefore, as a man of wit and gallantry, is called upon to support our author against the censures of pedantic severity. Whatever may be thought of the subject, the appeal is made with all Dryden's spirit and elegance, and his description of the Attic evenings spent with Sedley and his gay associates glosses over, and almost justifies, their occasional irregularities. We have but too often occasion to notice, with censure, the licentious manners of the giddy court of Charles; let us not omit its merited commendation. If the talents of the men of parts of that period were often ill directed, and ill rewarded, let not us, from whom that gratitude is justly due, forget that they were called forth and stimulated to exertion by the countenance and applause of the great. We, at least, who enjoy the fruit of these exertions, ought to rejoice, that the courtiers of Charles possessed the taste to countenance and applaud the genius which was too often perverted by the profligacy of their example, and left unrewarded amid their selfish prodigality.

* At this period, seconds in a duel fought, as well as principals.

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gamester finds in the relation of every cast by which he came to lose his money. I have had formerly so much success, that the miscarriage of this play was only my giving Fortune her revenge; I owed it her, and she was indulgent that she exacted not the payment long before. I will therefore deal more reasonably with you, than any poet has ever done with any patron: I do not so much as oblige you for my sake, to pass two ill hours in reading of my play. Think, if you please, that this dedication is only an occasion I have taken, to do myself the greatest honour imaginable with posterity; that is, to be recorded in the number of those men whom you have favoured with your friendship and esteem. For I am well assured, that, besides the present satisfaction I have, it will gain me the greatest part of my reputation with after ages, when they shall find me valuing myself on your kindness to me; I may have reason to suspect my own credit with them, but I have none to doubt of yours. And they who, perhaps, would forget me in my poems, would remember me in this epistle.

This was the course which has formerly been practised by the poets of that nation, who were masters of the universe. Horace and Ovid, who had little reason to distrust their immortality, yet took occasion to speak with honour of Virgil, Varius, Tibullus, and Propertius, their contemporaries; as if they sought, in the testimony of their friendship, a further evidence of their fame. For my own part, I, who am the least amongst the poets, have yet the fortune to be honoured with the best patron, and the best friend. For (to omit some great persons of our

Catullus.

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court, to whom I am many ways obliged, and who have taken care of me even amidst the exigencies of a war)* I can make my boast to have found a better Mæcenas in the person of my Lord Treasurer Clifford, † and a more elegant Tibullus in that of Sir Charles Sedley. I have chosen that poet to whom I would resemble you, not only because I think him at least equal, if not superior, to Ovid, in his elegies; nor because of his quality, for he was, you know, a Roman knight, as well as Ovid; but for his candour, his wealth, his way of living, and particularly because of this testimony which is given him by Horace, which I have a thousand times in my mind applied to you:

Non tu corpus eras sine pectore: Di tibi formam,
Di tibi divitias dederunt, artemque fruendi.
Quid voveat dulci nutricula majus alumno,
Quam sapere, et fari possit quæ sentiat, et cui
Gratia, forma, valetudo contingat abunde;
Et mundus victus, non deficiente crumena?

Certainly the poets of that age enjoyed much happiness in the conversation and friendship of one another. They imitated the best way of living, which was, to pursue an innocent and inoffensive pleasure, that which one of the ancients called *eruditam voluptatem*. We have, like them, our genial nights, where our discourse is neither too serious nor too light, but always pleasant, and, for the most part, instructive; the raillery, neither too sharp upon the present, nor too censorious on the absent; and the cups only such as will raise the conversation of the

* The second Dutch war, then raging.
† To whom the tragedy of "Amboyna" is dedicated.

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night, without disturbing the business of the morrow.* And thus far not only the philosophers, but the fathers of the church, have gone, without lessening their reputation of good manners, or of piety. For this reason, I have often laughed at the ignorant and ridiculous descriptions which some pedants have given of the wits, as they are pleased to call them; which are a generation of men as unknown to them, as the people of Tartary, or the Terra Australis, are to us. And therefore, as we draw giants and anthropophagi in those vacancies of our maps, where we have not travelled to discover better; so those wretches paint lewdness, atheism, folly, ill-reasoning, and all manner of extravagancies amongst us, for want of understanding what we

* It is impossible to avoid contrasting this beautiful account of elegant dissipation with the noted freak of Sir Charles Sedley, to whom it is addressed. In June 1663, being in company with Lord Buckhurst and Sir Thomas Ogle, in a tavern in Bow Street, and having become furious with intoxication, they not only exposed themselves, by committing the grossest indecencies in the balcony, in the sight of the passengers; but, a mob being thus collected, Sedley stripped himself naked, and proceeded to harangue them in the grossest and most impious language. The indignation of the populace being excited, they attempted to burst into the house, and a desperate riot ensued, in which the orator and his companions had nearly paid for their frolic with their lives. For this riot they were indicted in the Court of Common Pleas, and heavily fined; Sedley in the sum of £500. When the Lord Chief Justice, Sir Robert Hyde, to repress his insolence, asked him if he had ever read the "Complete Gentleman," Sedley answered, that he had read more books than his lordship; a repartee which exhibits more effrontery than wit. The culprits employed Killigrew and another courtier to solicit a mitigation of the fine; but, in the true spirit of court friendship, they begged it for themselves, and extorted every farthing.

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are. Oftentimes it so falls out, that they have a particular pique to some one amongst us, and then they immediately interest heaven in their quarrel; as it is an usual trick in courts, when one designs the ruin of his enemy, to disguise his malice with some concernment of the king's; and to revenge his own cause, with pretence of vindicating the honour of his master. Such wits as they describe, I have never been so unfortunate as to meet in your company; but have often heard much better reasoning at your table, than I have encountered in their books. The wits they describe, are the fops we banish: For blasphemy and atheism, if they were neither sin nor ill manners, are subjects so very common, and worn so threadbare, that people, who have sense, avoid them, for fear of being suspected to have none. It calls the good name of their wit in question, as it does the credit of a citizen when his shop is filled with trumperies and painted titles, instead of wares: We conclude them bankrupt to all manner of understanding; and that to use blasphemy is a kind of applying pigeons to the soles of the feet;* it proclaims their fancy, as well as judgment, to be in a desperate condition. I am sure, for your own particular, if any of these judges had once the happiness to converse with you,—to hear the candour of your opinions; how freely you commend that wit in others of which you have so large a portion yourself; how unapt you are to be censorious; with how much easiness you speak so many things, and those so pointed, that

* [Live pigeons: a favourite device for retaining (or supplying the supposed loss of) vital heat.—Ed.]

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no other man is able to excel, or perhaps to reach by study;—they would, instead of your accusers, become your proselytes. They would reverence so much sense, and so much good-nature in the same person; and come, like the satyr, to warm themselves at that fire, of which they were ignorantly afraid when they stood at distance. But you have too great a reputation to be wholly free from censure: it is a fine which fortune sets upon all extraordinary persons, and from which you should not wish to be delivered till you are dead. I have been used by my critics much more severely, and have more reason to complain, because I am deeper taxed for a less estate. I am, ridiculously enough, accused to be a contemner of universities; that is, in other words, an enemy of learning; without the foundation of which, I am sure, no man can pretend to be a poet. And if this be not enough, I am made a detractor from my predecessors, whom I confess to have been my masters in the art. But this latter was the accusation of the best judge, and almost the best poet, in the Latin tongue. You find Horace complaining, that, for taxing some verses in Lucilius, he himself was blamed by others, though his design was no other than mine now, to improve the knowledge of poetry; and it was no defence to him, amongst his enemies, any more than it is for me, that he praised Lucilius where he deserved it; *paginâ laudatur eâdem.* It is for this reason I will be no more mistaken for my good meaning: I know I honour Ben Jonson more than my little critics, because, without vanity I may own, I understand him better.* As for the errors they pretend to find

* Our author here shortly repeats what he has said at more

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in me, I could easily show them, that the greatest part of them are beauties; and for the rest, I could recriminate upon the best poets of our nation, if I could resolve to accuse another of little faults, whom, at the same time, I admire for greater excellencies. But I have neither concernment enough upon me to write anything in my own defence, neither will I gratify the ambition of two wretched scribblers, who desire nothing more than to be answered. I have not wanted friends, even among strangers, who have defended me more strongly, than my contemptible pedant could attack me.* For the other, he is only like Fungoso in the play, who follows the fashion at a distance, and adores the Fastidious Brisk of Oxford.† You can bear me witness, that I have not consideration enough for either of them to be angry. Let Mævius and Bavius admire each other; I wish to be hated by them and their fellows, by the same reason for which I desire to be loved by you. And I leave it to the world, whether their judgment of my poetry

length in his Defence of the Epilogue to the second part of "The Conquest of Granada."

* The pedant Mr. Malone conjectures to be Matthew [Martin] Clifford, Master of the Charter-house, one of the Duke of Buckingham's colleagues in writing "The Rehearsal." But the *pedant* is obviously the same with the Fastidious Brisk *of Oxford*, mentioned in the following sentence, which can hardly apply to Clifford, who was educated at Cambridge. One Leigh is said by Wood to have written the Censure of the Rota; and as he was educated at Oxford, and the book printed there, he may be "the contemptible pedant," though his profession was that of a player in the Duke's company.

† Fungoso and Sir Fastidious Brisk are two characters in "Every Man out of his Humour;" the former of whom is represented as copying the dress and manners of the latter. Dryden seems only to mean, that one of those pamphleteers was the servile imitator of the other.

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ought to be preferred to yours; though they are as much prejudiced by their malice, as I desire you should be led by your kindness, to be partial to,

SIR,

Your most humble,

And most faithful servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

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PROLOGUE.

Prologues, like bells to churches, toil you in
With chiming verse, till the dull plays begin;
With this sad difference though, of pit and pew,*
You damn the poet, but the priest damns you:
But priests can treat you at your own expence,
And gravely call you fools without offence.
Poets, poor devils, have ne'er your folly shown,
But, to their cost, you proved it was their own:
For, when a fop 's presented on the stage,
Straight all the coxcombs in the town engage;
For his deliverance and revenge they join,
And grunt, like hogs, about their captive swine,
Your poets daily split upon this shelf,—
You must have fools, yet none will have himself.
Or if, in kindness, you that leave would give,
No man could write you at that rate you live:
For some of you grow fops with so much haste,
Riot in nonsense, and commit such waste,
'Twould ruin poets should they spend so fast.
He, who made this, observed what farces hit,
And durst not disoblige you now with wit.
But, gentlemen, you over-do the mode;
You must have fools out of the common road.
Th' unnatural strained buffoon is only taking;
No fop can please you now of God's own making.
Pardon our poet, if he speaks his mind;
You come to plays with your own follies lined:
Small fools fall on you, like small showers, in vain;
Your own oiled coats keep out all common rain.
You must have Mamamouchi,† such a fop
As would appear a monster in a shop;
He 'll fill your pit and boxes to the brim,
Where, rammed in crowds, you see yourselves in him.

---

* [In the original "pue," the better spelling.—Ed.]

† See the introductory remarks on the "Citizen turned Gentleman," of Ravenscroft, where the jest turns on Jorden's being created a *Mamamouchi*, or Turkish paladin, as it is interpreted.

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Sure there 's some spell, our poet never knew,
In *Hullibabilah de,* and *Chu, chu, chu* ;
But *Marababah sahem* * most did touch you ;
That is, Oh how we love the Mamamouchi !
Grimace and habit sent you pleased away :
You damned the poet, and cried up the play.
This thought had made our author more uneasy,
But that he hopes I 'm fool enough to please ye.
But here 's my grief,—though nature, joined with art,
Have cut me out to act a fooling part,
Yet, to your praise, the few wits here will say,
'Twas imitating you taught Haynes † to play.

---

* *Trickman.* I told him she was wondrous beautiful. Then said he, *Marababa sahem,* Ah how much in love am I!
Jorden. Marababa sahem, means, how much in love am I?
Trick. Yes.
Jorden. I am beholden to you for telling me, for I ne'er could have thought that Marababa sahem, should signify, Ah how much in love am I! Ah this Turkish is an admirable language!
Citizen turned Gentleman, Act IV.

In the same piece, we are presented with a grand chorus of Turks and Dervises, who sing, "*Hu la baba la chou ba la baba la da.*" [There is not much to be said for Ravenscroft, but in this instance it is fair to remember that if anybody is to blame for the introduction of jargon, it is a very different person—Molière.—ED.]

† [Who acted Benito.—ED.]

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Duke of Mantua.
Prince FREDERICK, *his son.*
AURELIAN, *a Roman Gentleman.*
CAMILLO, *his friend.*
MARIO, *Governor of Rome.*
ASCANIO, *page of honour to the Prince.*
BENITO, *Servant to* AURELIAN.
VALERIO, *confidant to the Duke.*
FABIO, *Servant to* MARIO.

SOPHRONIA, *Abbess of the Torre di Specchi.*
LUCRETIA, *a Lady designed to be a Nun.*
HIPPOLITA, *a Nun.*
LAURA, VIOLETTA, } *Sisters, nieces to* MARIO.
FRONTONA, *lets Lodgings.*

SCENE—*Rome.*

[Cast:—*Duke,* Mohun; *Frederick,* Kynaston; *Aurelian,* Hart; *Camillo,* Burt; *Mario,* Cartwright; *Ascanio,* Mrs. Reeve; *Benito,* Haynes.
Sophronia, Mrs. James; *Lucretia,* Mrs. Marshall; *Hippolita,* Mrs. Knepp; *Laura,* Mrs. Boutell; *Violetta,* Mrs. Coxe.—ED.]

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THE

ASSIGNATION;

OR,

LOVE IN A NUNNERY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room, a great glass placed.*

Enter BENITO, *with a guitar in his hand.*

Ben. [*Bowing to the glass.*] Save you, sweet signior Benito; by my faith I am glad to see you look so bonnily to-day. Gad, sir, everything becomes you to a miracle: your peruke, your clothes, your hat, your shoe-ties; and, gad, sir, let me tell you, you become everything; you walk with such a grace, and you bow so pliantly!

Aurelian. [*Within.*] Benito, where are you, sirrah?

Ben. Sirrah! That my damned master should call a man of my extraordinary endowments, sirrah! A man of my endowments? Gad, I ask my own pardon, I mean a person of my endowments; for a man of my parts and talents, though he be but a *valet de chambre*, is a person; and let me tell my master—Gad, I frown too, as like

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a person as any jack-gentleman of them all; but, gad, when I do not frown, I am an absolute beauty, whatever this glass says to the contrary; and, if this glass deny it, 'tis a base lying glass; so I 'll tell it to its face, and kick it down into the bargain.

Aur. [*Within.*] Why, Benito, how long shall we stay for you?

Ben. I come, sir.—What the devil would he have? But, by his favour, I 'll first survey my dancing, and my singing. [*He plays on the guitar, and dances and sings to the glass.*] I think that was not amiss: I think so. Gad, I can dance [*Lays down the guitar.*] and play no longer, I am in such a rapture with myself. What a villanous fate have I! With all these excellencies, and a profound wit, and yet to be a serving-man!

Enter AURELIAN *and* CAMILLO.

Aur. Why, you slave, you dog, you son of twenty fathers, am I to be served at this rate eternally? A pox of your conceited coxcomb!

Cam. Nay, pr'ythee, Aurelian, be not angry.

Aur. You do not know this rogue, as I do, Camillo. Now, by this guitar, and that great looking-glass, I am certain how he has spent his time. He courts himself every morning in that glass at least an hour; there admires his own person, and his parts, and studies postures and grimaces, to make himself yet more ridiculous than he was born to be.

Cam. You wrong him, sure.

Aur. I do; for he is yet more fool than I can speak him. I never sent him on a message, but he runs first to that glass, to practise how he may become his errand. Speak, is this a lie, sirrah?

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Ben. I confess I have some kindness for the mirror.

Aur. The mirror! there 's a touch of his poetry too; he could not call it a glass. Then the rogue has the impudence to make sonnets, as he calls them; and, which is greater impudence, he sings them too; there 's not a street in all Rome which he does not nightly disquiet with his villanous serenade: with that guitar there, the younger brother of a cittern, he frights away the watch; and for his violin, it squeaks so lewdly, that Sir Tibert* in the gutter mistakes him for his mistress. 'Tis a mere cat-call.

Cam. Is this true, Benito?

Ben. to *Cam.* [*Aside.*] My master, sir, may say his pleasure; I divert myself sometimes with hearing him. Alas, good gentleman, 'tis not given to all persons to penetrate into men's parts and qualities; but I look on you, sir, as a man of judgment, and therefore you shall hear me play and sing.

[*He takes up the guitar, and begins.*

Aur. Why, you invincible sot you, will nothing mend you? Lay it down, or——

Ben. to *Cam.* Do ye see, sir, this enemy to the muses? he will not let me hold forth to you. [*Lays down the guitar.*] O envy and ignorance, whither will you!—But, gad, before I 'll suffer my parts to be kept in obscurity——

Aur. What will you do, rascal?

Ben. I 'll take up the guitar, and suffer heroically. [*He plays,* AUR. *kicks.*

Aur. What? do you mutiny?

---

* A common name for a cat, being that by which the representative of the feline race is distinguished in the History of Reynard the Fox. See Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet.*

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Ben. Ay, do, kick till your toes ache; I 'll be baffled in my music by ne'er a foot in Christendom.

Aur. I 'll put you out of your tune, with a vengeance to you.

[*As* AURELIAN *kicks harder*, BENITO *sings faster and sometimes cries out.*]

Cam. holding Aur. Nay, then, 'tis time to stickle.* Hold, Aurelian, pr'ythee spare Benito, you know we have occasion for him.

Aur. I think that was well kicked.

Ben. And I think that was well sung too.

Cam. Enough, Aurelian.

Ben. No, sir; let him proceed to discourage virtue, and see what will come on it.

Cam. Now to our business. But we must first instruct Benito.

Aur. Be ruled by me, and do not trust him. I prophesy he 'll spoil the whole affair; he has a worm in his head as long as a conger, a brain so barren of all sense, and yet so fruitful of foolish plots, that if he does not all things his own way, yet at least he 'll ever be mingling his designs with yours, and go halves with you; so that, what with his ignorance, what with his plotting, he 'll be sure to ruin you with an intention to serve you. For my part, I had turned him off long since, but that my wise father commanded the contrary.

Cam. Still you speak, as if what we did were choice, and not necessity. You know their uncle is suspicious of me, and consequently jealous of all my servants; but if we employ yours, who is not suspected, because you are a stranger, I doubt not to get an assignation with the younger sister.

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* *Stickle.* To interfere.

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Aur. Well, use your own way, Camillo: but if it ever succeed with his management——

Cam. You must understand then, Benito, that this old Signior Mario has two nieces, with one of which I am desperately in love, and——

Ben. [*Aside to him.*] I understand you already, sir, and you desire love reciprocal. Leave your business in my hands; and, if it succeed not, think me no wiser than my master.

Cam. Pray take me with you. These sisters are great beauties, and vast fortunes; but, by a clause in their father's will, if they marry without their uncle's consent, are to forfeit all. Their uncle, who is covetous and base to the last degree, takes advantage of this clause; and, under pretence of not finding fit matches for them, denies his consent to all who love them.

Ben. Denies them marriage! Very good, sir.

Cam. More than this, he refuses access to any suitor, and immures them in a mean apartment on the garden side, where he barbarously debars them from all human society.

Ben. Uses them most barbarously! Still better and better.

Cam. The younger of these sisters, Violetta, I have seen often in the garden, from the balcony in this chamber, which looks into it; have divers times shot tickets on the point of an arrow, which she has taken; and, by the signs she made me, I find they were not ill received.

Ben. I 'll tell you now, just such an amour as this had I once with a young lady, that——

Aur. Quote yourself again, you rogue, and my feet shall renew their acquaintance with your buttocks.

Cam. Dear Benito, take care to convey this ticket to Violetta; I saw her just now go by to

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the next chapel: be sure to stand ready to give her holy water, and slip the ticket into the hand of her woman, Beatrix; and take care the elder sister, Laura, sees you not, for she knows nothing of our amour.

Ben. A word to the wise. Have you no service to Laura? [*To* AUR.

Aur. None that I shall trouble you withal; I 'll see first what returns you make from this voyage, before I put in my venture with you. Away; begone, Mr. Mercury.

Ben. I fly, Mr. Jupiter. [*Exit.*

Aur. This lady, Laura, I have seen from your balcony, and was seen by her. Methought, too, she looked with a languishing eye upon me, as who should say, Are you a man, and have no pity for a poor distressed virgin? For my part, I never found so much disposition in myself to love any woman at first sight. Handsome she is; of that I am certain.

Cam. And has wit, I dare assure you; but I have not heard she has admitted of any gallantry.

Aur. Her hour is not come yet; she has not met with a man to love; when that happens (as I am resolved to push my fortune) you shall see that, as her love warms, her virtue will melt down, and dissolve in it; for there 's no such bawd to a woman, as her own wit is.

Cam. I look upon the assignation as certain; will you promise me to go? You and Benito shall walk in the garden, while I search the nymph within the shade. One thing I had forgot to tell you, that our General of the Church, the Duke of Mantua, and the prince his son, are just approaching the gates of Rome. Will you go see the ceremony of their entrance?

Aur. With all my heart. They say he has

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behaved himself gallantly against the French, at their return from Naples. Besides, I have a particular knowledge of young Prince Frederick, ever since he was last at our Venetian carnivals.

Cam. Away, then, quickly; lest we miss the solemnity. [*Exeunt.*

Enter LAURA *and* VIOLETTA, *striving about a letter, which* LAURA *holds.*

Vio. Let it go, I say.

Lau. I say, let you go.

Vio. Nay, sweet sister Laura.

Lau. Nay, dear Violetta, it is in vain to contend; I am resolved I 'll see it.

[*Plucks the paper from* VIOLETTA.

Vio. But I am resolved you shall not read it. I know not what authority this is which you assume, or what privilege a year or two can give you, to use this sovereignty over me.

Lau. Do you rebel, young gentlewoman? I 'll make you know I have a double right over you. One, as I have more years, and the other, as I have more wit.

Vio. Though I am not all air and fire, as you are, yet that little wit I have will serve to conduct my affairs without a governess.

Lau. No, gentlewoman, but it shall not. Are you fit, at fifteen, to be trusted with a maidenhead? It is as much as your betters can manage at full twenty.

For 'tis of a nature so subtile,
That, if it 's not luted with care,
The spirit will work through the bottle,
And vanish away into air.

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To keep it, there nothing so hard is,
'Twill go betwixt waking and sleeping;
The simple too weak for a guard is,
And no wit would be plagued with the keeping.

Vio. For aught I see, you are as little to be trusted with your madness, as I with my simplicity; and, therefore, pray restore my letter.

Lau. [*Reading it.*] What 's here? An humble petition for a private meeting? Are you twittering at that sport already, mistress novice?

Vio. How! I a novice at ripe fifteen? I would have you to know, that I have killed my man before I was fourteen, and now am ready for another execution.

Lau. A very forward rose-bud: You open apace, gentlewoman. I find indeed your desires are quick enough; but where will you have cunning to carry on your business with decency and secrecy? Secrecy, I say, which is a main part of chastity in our sex. Where wit, to be sensible of the delicacies of love? the tenderness of a farewell-sigh for an absence? the joy of a return? the zeal of a pressing hand? the sweetness of little quarrels, caused and cured by the excess of love? and, in short, the pleasing disquiets of the soul, always restless, and wandering up and down in a paradise of thought, of its own making?

Vio. If I understood not thus much before, I find you are an excellent instructor; and that argues you have had a feeling of the cause in your time too, sister.

Lau. What have I confessed before I was aware! She 'll find out my inclination to that stranger, whom I have only seen, and to whom

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I have never spoken—[*Aside.*] No, good Violetta, I never was in love; all my experience is from plays and romances. But who is this man, to whom you have promised an assignation?

Vio. You 'll tell my uncle.

Lau. I hate my uncle more than you do.

Vio. You know the man, 'tis Signior Camillo: His birth and fortunes are equal to what I can expect; and he tells me his intentions are honourable.

Lau. Have I not seen him lately in his balcony, which looks into our garden, with another handsome gentleman in his company, who seems a stranger?

Vio. They are the same. Do you think it a reasonable thing, dear Laura, that my uncle should keep us so strictly, that we must be beholden to hearsay, to know a young gallant is in the next house to us?

Lau. 'Tis hard, indeed, to be mewed like hawks, and never manned: To be locked in like nuns here.

Vio. They, that look for nun's flesh in me, shall be mistaken.

Lau. Well, what answer have you returned to this letter?

Vio. That I would meet him at eight this evening, in the close walk in the garden, attended only by Beatrix, my woman.

Lau. Who comes with him?

Vio. Only his friend's man, Benito; the same who brought me the letter which you took from me.

Lau. Stay, let me think a little. Does Camillo, or this Benito, know your maid Beatrix?

Vio. They have never talked with her; but only seen her.

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Lau. 'Tis concluded then. You shall meet your servant, but I 'll be your Beatrix: I 'll go instead of her, and counterfeit your waiting-woman; in the dark I may easily pass for her. By this means I shall be present to instruct you, for you are yet a callow maid: I must teach you to peck a little; you may come to prey for yourself in time.

Vio. A little teaching will serve my turn: If the old one left me to myself, I could go near to get my living.

Lau. I find you are eager, and baiting* to be gone already, and I 'll not hinder you when your hour approaches. In the meantime, go in, and sigh, and think fondly and ignorantly of your approaching pleasures:

Love, in young hearts, is like the must of wine;
'Tis sweetest then; but elder 'tis more fine.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The front of a Nunnery.*

Prince FREDERICK, AURELIAN, CAMILLO, *and* ASCANIO, *the Prince's Page.*

Fred. My father's ancient, and may repose himself, if he pleases, after the ceremony of his entrance; but we, who are younger, should think it a sin to spend any part of daylight in a chamber. What are your ways of living here?

Cam. Why, sir, we pass our time, either in

* [*Baiting.* The last of the terms of falconry which have been used lavishly in this scene, and the least common. The hawk is said to "bait" when she claps her wings just before stooping.—ED.]

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conversation alone, or in love alone, or in love and conversation together.

Fred. Come, explain, explain, my counsel learned in the laws of living.

Cam. For conversation alone; that 's either in going to court, with a face of business, and there discoursing of the affairs of Europe, of which Rome, you know, is the public mart; or, at best, meeting the virtuosi, and there wearying one another with rehearsing our own works in prose and poetry.

Fred. Away with that dry method, I will have none on 't. To the next.

Cam. Love alone, is either plain wenching, where every courtesan is your mistress, and every man your rival; or else, what 's worse, plain whining after one woman: that is, walking before her door by day, and haunting her street by night, with guitars, dark-lanthorns, and rondaches.*

Aur. Which, I take it, is, or will be our case, Camillo.

Fred. Neither of these will fit my humour: If your third prove not more pleasant, I shall stick to the old Almain recreation; the divine bottle, and the bounteous glass, that tuned up old Horace to his odes.

Aur. You shall need to have no recourse to that; for love and conversation will do your business: that is, sir, a most delicious courtesan, —I do not mean downright punk,—but punk of more than ordinary sense in conversation; punk in ragout, punk, who plays on the lute, and sings; and, to sum up all, punk, who cooks and dresses

* *Rondaches.* Targets or bucklers. These were a part of the equipment of a serenader. See that of Quevedo's Night Adventurer.

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up herself, with poignant sauce, to become a new dish every time she is served up to you.

Fred. This I believe, Aurelian, is your method of living, you talk of it so savourily.

Aur. There is yet another more insipid sort of love and conversation: As, for example, look you there, sir; the courtship of our nuns. [*Pointing to the Nunnery.*] They talk prettily; but, a pox on them, they raise our appetites, and then starve us. They are as dangerous as cold fruits without wine, and are never to be used but where there are abundance of wenches in readiness, to qualify them.

Cam. But yet they are ever at hand, and easy to come by; and if you 'll believe an experienced sinner, easiness in love is more than half the pleasure of it.

Fred. This way of chatting pleases me; for debauchery, I hate it; and to love is not in my nature, except it be my friends. Pray, what do you call that nunnery?

Cam. 'Tis a house of Benedictines, called the *Torre di Specchi*, where only ladies of the best quality are professed.

[LUCRETIA *and* HIPPOLITA *appear at the grate.*

Aur. Look you yonder, sir, are two of the pretty magpies in white and black. If you will lull yourself into a Platonic dream, you may; but consider your sport will be dull when you play without stakes.

Fred. No matter, I 'll fool away an hour of courtship; for I never was engaged in a serious love, nor I believe can be. Farewell, gentlemen; at this time I shall dispense with your attendance;—nay, without ceremony, because I would be incognito.

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Cam. Come, then, Aurelian, to our own affairs.
[*Exeunt* AURELIAN *and* CAMILLO.

The Prince and ASCANIO *approach.*

Fred. [*To* LUCRETIA.] For what crime, fair creature, were you condemned to this perpetual prison?

Luc. For chastity and devotion, and two or three such melancholy virtues: They first brought me hither, and now must keep me company.

Fred. I should rather have guessed it had been murder, and that you are veiled for fear of doing more mischief with those eyes; for, indeed, they are too sharp to be trusted out of the scabbard.

Luc. Cease, I beseech you, to accuse my eyes, till they have done some execution on your heart.

Fred. But I am out of reach, perhaps.

Luc. Trust not to that; they may shoot at a distance, though they cannot strike you near at hand.

Fred. But if they should kill, you are ne'er the better: There's a grate betwixt us, and you cannot fetch in the dead quarry.

Luc. Provided we destroy the enemy, we do not value their dead bodies: But you, perhaps, are in your first error, and think we are rather captives than warriors; that we come like prisoners to the grate, to beg the charity of passengers for their love.

Fred. [*To* ASCANIO.] Inquire, as dexterously as you can, what is the name and quality of this charming creature.

Luc. [*To* HIPPOLITA.] Be sure, if the page approaches you, to get out of him his master's name. [*The Prince and* LUCRETIA *seem to talk.*

Hip. [*To* ASCANIO.] By that short whisper,

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which I observed you took with your master, I imagine, Mr. Page, you come to ask a certain question of me.

Asca. By this thy question, and by that whisper with thy lady, (O thou nymph of devotion!) I find I am to impart a secret, and not to ask one: Therefore either confess thou art yet a mere woman under that veil, and, by consequence, most horribly inquisitive, or thou shalt lose thy longing, and know nothing of my master.

Hip. By my virginity, you shall tell first.

Asca. You 'll break your oath, on purpose to make the forfeit.

Hip. Your master is called——

Asca. Your lady is ycleped——

Hip. For decency, in all matters of love, the man should offer first, you know.

Asca. That needs not, when the damsel is so willing.

Hip. But I have sworn not to discover first, that her name is madam Lucretia; fair, as you see, to a miracle, and of a most charming conversation; of royal blood, and niece to his Holiness; and, if she were not espoused to heaven, a mistress for a sovereign prince.

Asca. After these encomiums, 'twere vain for me to praise my master: He is only poor Prince Frederick, otherwise called the Prince of Mantua; liberal, and valiant, discreet and handsome, and, in my simple judgment, a fitter servant for your lady, than his old father, who is a sovereign.

Hip. Dare you make all this good, you have said of your master?

Asca. Yes, and as much more of myself to you.

Hip. I defy you upon 't, as my lady's second.

Asca. As my master's, I accept it. The time?

Hip. Six this evening.

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Asca. The place?
Hip. At this grate.
Asca. The weapons?
Hip. Hands, and it may be lips.
Asca. 'Tis enough: Expect to hear from me.
[*They withdraw, and whisper to their Principals. After the whisper,*

Fred. [*To* LUCRETIA.] Madam, I am glad I know my enemy; for since it is impossible to see, and not admire you, the name of Lucretia is the best excuse for my defeat.

Luc. Persons, like Prince Frederick, ought not to assault religious houses, or to pursue chastity and virtue to their last retreat.

Fred. A monastery is no retreat for chastity; 'tis only a hiding-place for bad faces, where they are thrust in crowds together, like heaps of rubbish out of the way, that the world may not be peopled with deformed persons: And that such, who are out of play themselves, may pray for a blessing on their endeavours, who are getting handsome children, and carrying on the work for public benefit.

Luc. Then you would put off heaven with your leavings, and use it like them, who play at cards alone; take the courts * for yourself, and give the refuse to the gentlemen.

Fred. You mistake me, madam; I would so contrive it, that heaven and we might be served at once. We have occasion for wit and beauty; now piety and ugliness will do as well for heaven: that plays at one game, and we at another; and therefore heaven may make its hand with the same cards that we put out.

Luc. I could easily convince you, if the argu-

* ["Court-cards."—ED.]

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ment concerned me; but I am one of those, whom, for want of wit and beauty, you have condemned to religion; and therefore am your humble servant, to pray for your handsome wife and children.

Fred. Heaven forbid, madam, that I should condemn you, or indeed any handsome woman, to be religious! No, madam; the occasions of the world are great and urgent for such as you; and, for my part, I am of opinion, that it is as great a sin for a beauty to enter into a nunnery, as for an ugly woman to stay out of it.

Luc. The cares of the world are not yet upon you; but as soon as ever you come to be afflicted with sickness, or visited with a wife, you 'll be content I should pray for you.

Fred. Anywhere rather than in a cloister; for, truly, I suppose, all your prayers there will be how to get out of it; and, upon that supposition, madam, I am come to offer you my service for your redemption. Come, faith, be persuaded, the church shall lose nothing by it: I 'll take you out, and put in two or three crooked apostles in your place. [*Bell rings within.*

Luc. Hark, the bell rings; I must leave you: 'tis a summons to our devotion.

Fred. Will you leave me for your prayers, madam? You may have enough of them at any time, but remember you cannot have a man so easily.

Luc. Well, I 'll say my beads for you, and that 's but charity; for I believe I leave you in a most deplorable condition. [*Exeunt Women.*

Fred. Not deplorable neither, but a little altered: If I could be in love, as I am sure I cannot, it should be with her, for I like her conversation strangely.

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Asca. Then, as young as I am, sir, I am beforehand with you; for I am in love already. I would fain make the first proof of my manhood upon a nun: I find I have a mighty grudging to holy flesh.

Fred. I 'll ply Lucretia again, as soon as ever her devotion 's over. Methinks these nuns divide their time most admirably; from love to prayers, from prayers to love; that is, just so much sin, just so much godliness.

Asca. Then I can claim that sister's love by merit.

Half man, half boy; for her half flesh, half spirit.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Street.*

AURELIAN *and* CAMILLO.

Aur. I 'll proceed no further, if Benito goes: I know his folly will produce some mischief.

Cam. But Violetta desired me, in her note, to bring him, on purpose to pass the time with her woman, Beatrix.

Aur. That objection 's easily removed: I 'll supply Benito's place; the darkness will prevent discovery; and, for my discourse, I 'll imitate the half wit and patched breeding of a *valet de chambre.*

Cam. But how shall we get rid of him?

Aur. Let me alone for that.

Enter BENITO.

Ben. Come, are we ready, gallants? The clock 's upon the stroke of eight.

Aur. But we have altered our resolution; we go another way to-night.

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Ben. I hope you have not broke my assignation?

Aur. Why do you hope so?

Ben. Because my reputation is engaged in 't: I 've stipulated, upon mine honour, that you shall come.

Aur. I shall beat you, if you follow me. Go, sirrah, and adjourn to the great looking-glass, and let me hear no more from you till to-morrow morning.

Ben. Sir, my fidelity, and, if I may be so vain, my discretion, may stand you in some stead.

Aur. Well, come along then; they are brave fellows, who have challenged us; you shall have fighting enough, sir.

Ben. How, sir, fighting?

Aur. You may escape with the loss of a leg, or an arm, or some such transitory limb.

Ben. No, sir; I have that absolute obedience to your commands, that I will bridle my courage, and stay at home. [*Exit.*

Cam. You took the only way to be rid of him. There 's the wall; behind yond pane of it we 'll set up the ladder. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Night-piece of a Garden.*

Enter LAURA *and* VIOLETTA.

Vio. Remember your waiting-woman's part, Laura.

Lau. I warrant you, I 'll wait on you by night, as well as I governed you by day.

Vio. Hark, I hear footsteps; and now, methinks, I see something approaching us.

Lau. They are certainly the men whom we expect.

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Enter AURELIAN *and* CAMILLO.

Cam. I hear women's voices.

Aur. We are right, I warrant you.

Cam. Violetta, my love!

Vio. My dear Camillo!

Cam. Speak those words again; my own name never sounded so sweetly to me, as when you spoke it, and made me happy by adding *dear* to it.

Vio. Speak softly then; I have stolen these few minutes from my watchful uncle and my sister, and they are as full of danger as they are of love. Something within me checks me too, and says, I was too forward in venturing thus to meet you.

Cam. You are too fearful rather; and fear's the greatest enemy to love.

Vio. But night will hide my blushes, when I tell you, I love you much, or I had never trusted my virtue and my person in your hands.

Cam. The one is sacred, and the other safe; but this auspicious minute is our first of near converse. May I not hope that favour, which strangers, in civility, may claim, even from the most reserved? [*Kisses her hand.*

Vio. I fear you 'll censure me.

Cam. Yes, as the blest above tax heaven for making them so happy. [*They walk further off.*

Aur. [*Stepping towards* LAURA.] Damsel of darkness, advance, and meet my flames!

Lau. [*Stepping forward.*] Right trusty valet, heard, but yet unseen, I have advanced one step on reputation.

Aur. Now, by laudable custom, I am to love thee vehemently.

Lau. We should do well to see each other

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first: You know 'tis ill taking money without light.

Aur. O, but the coin of love is known by the weight only, and you may feel it in the dark: Besides, you know 'tis prince-like to love without seeing.

Lau. But then you may be served as princes are sometimes.

Aur. Let us make haste, however, and despatch a little love out of the way: We may do it now with ease, and save ourselves a great deal of trouble, if we take it in time, before it grows too fast upon our hands.

Lau. Fie, no; let us love discreetly: we must manage our passion, and not love all our love out at one meeting, but leave some for another time.

Aur. I am for applying the plaster whilst the wound is green; 'twill heal the better.

[*Takes her by the hand.*

Lau. Let go my hand! What crime has the poor wretch committed, that you press it thus? I remember no mischief it has done you.

Aur. O, 'tis a heinous malefactor, and is pressed by law, because it will confess nothing. Come, withdraw a little further, we have urgent business with one another.

Lau. 'Twere a shame to quit my ground upon the first charge; yet if you please to take a truce a little, I will consent to go behind the lovers, and listen with you.

Aur. I wonder you deferred the proposition so long. I were neither true valet, nor you true woman, if we could not eaves-drop.

[*They retire behind the other two, who come forward upon the Stage.*

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Cam. [*Kissing* VIOLETTA'S *hand.*] Give me another yet, and then——

Vio. And then will you be satisfied?

Cam. And then I 'll ask a thousand more, and ne'er be satisfied. Kisses are but thin nourishment; they are too soon digested, and hungry love craves more.

Vio. You feed a wolf within you.

Cam. Then feast my love with a more solid diet.

He makes us now a miser's feast, and we
Forbear to take our fill. The silent night,
And all these downy hours, were made for lovers:
Gently they tread, and softly measure time,
That no rude noise may fright the tender maid,
From giving all her soul to melting joys.

Vio. You do not love me; if you did, you would not
Thus urge your satisfaction in my shame;
At best, I see you would not love me long,
For they, who plunder, do not mean to stay.

Cam. I haste to take possession of my own.

Vio. Ere heaven and holy vows have made it so?

Cam. Then witness, heaven, and all these twinkling stars——

Vio. Hold, hold, you are distempered with your love;
Time, place, and strong desires, now swear, not you.

Cam. Is not love love, without a priest and altars?
The temples are inanimate, and know not
What vows are made in them; the priest stands ready
For his hire, and cares not what hearts he couples;
Love alone is marriage.

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Vio. I never will receive these midnight vows:
But when I come hereafter to your arms,
I 'll bring you a sincere, full, perfect bliss;
Then you will thank me that I kept it so,
And trust my faith hereafter.

Lau. There is your destiny, lover mine: I am to be honest by infection; my lady will none, you see.

Aur. Truth is, they are a lost couple, unless they learn grace by our example. Come, shall we begin first, and shame them both?

[*Takes her by the hand again.*

Lau. You will never be warned off this hand, Benito.

Aur. Oh, it is so soft, as it were made on purpose to take hearts, and handle them without hurting! These taper fingers too, and even joints so supple, that methinks I mould them as they pass through mine: nay, in my conscience, though it be nonsense to say it, your hands feel white too.

Lau. Methinks yours is not very hard, for a serving-man's. But where, in the name of wonder, have you learned to talk so courtly? You are a strange *valet de chambre.*

Aur. And you are as strange a waiting-woman: You have so stabbed me with your repartees to-night, that I should be glad to change the weapon, to be revenged on you.

Lau. These, I suppose, are fragments, which you learned from your wild master, Aurelian: many a poor woman has passed through his hands with these very words. You treat me just like a serving-man, with the cold meat which comes from your master's table.

Aur. You could never have suspected me for using my master's wit, if you had not been guilty

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of purloining from your lady. I am told, that Laura, your mistress's sister, has wit enough to confound a hundred Aurelians.

Lau. I shall do your commendations to Laura for your compliment.

Aur. And I shall not fail to revenge myself, by informing Aurelian of yours.

Enter BENITO *with a Guitar.*

Ben. The poor souls shall not lose by the bargain, though my foolish gadding masters have disappointed them. That ladder of ropes was doubtless left there by the young lady in hope of them.

Vio. Hark, I hear a noise in the garden.

Lau. I fear we are betrayed.

Cam. Fear nothing, madam, but stand close.

Ben. Now, Benito, is the time to hold forth thy talent, and set up for thyself. Yes, ladies, you shall be serenaded, and when I have displayed my gifts, I 'll retire in triumph over the wall, and hug myself for the adventure.

[*He fums* on the Guitar.*

Vio. Let us make haste, sister, and get into covert; this music will raise the house upon us immediately.

Lau. Alas, we cannot; the damn'd musician stands just in the door where we should pass.

Ben. singing. *Eveillez vous, belles endormies;*
Eveillez vous: car il est jour:
Mettez la tête à la fenestre,
Vous entendrez parler d'amour.

Aur. [*aside to* CAM.] Camillo, this is my in-

* [Not "fumbles," but "thrums."—ED.]

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corrigible rogue; and I dare not call him Benito, for fear of discovering myself not to be Benito.

Cam. The alarm is already given through the house. Ladies, you must be quick: Secure yourselves, and leave us to shift. [*Exeunt Women.*

Within. This way, this way.

Aur. I hear them coming; and, as ill luck will have it, just by that quarter where our ladder is placed.

Cam. Let us hide in the dark walk till they are past.

Aur. But then Benito will be caught, and, being known to be my man, will betray us.

Ben. I hear some in the garden: Sure they are the ladies, that are taken with my melody. To it again, Benito; this time I will absolutely enchant them. [*Fums again.*

Aur. He is at it again. Why, Benito, are you mad?

Ben. Ah, madam! are you there? This is such a favour to your poor unworthy servant. [*Sings.*

But still between kissing Amyntas did say,
Fair Phillis, look up, and you 'll turn night to day.

Aur. Come away, you insufferable rascal; the house is up, and will be upon us immediately.

Ben. O gemini, is it you, sir?

Within. This way; follow, follow.

Aur. Leave your scraping and croaking, and step with us into this arbour.

Ben. Scraping and croaking! 'Sfoot, sir, either grant I sing and play to a miracle, or I 'll justify my music, though I am caught, and hanged for it.

Enter MARIO, *and Servants.*

Mar. Where is this serenading rascal? If I find him, I 'll make him an example to all mid-

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night caterwaulers, of which this fiddler is the lewdest.

Ben. O that I durst but play my tune out, to convince him! Soul of harmony! Is this lewd?

[*Plays and sings softly.*

Cam. Peace, dear Benito: We must flatter him.

Ben. [*Singing softly.*] *Mettez la tête:* The notes which follow are so sweet, sir, I must sing them, though it may be my ruin—*Parler d'amour.*

[LAURA *and* VIOLETTA *in the Balcony.*

Lau. Yes, we are safe, sister; but they are yet in danger.

Vio. They are just upon them.

Lau. We must do something: Help, help! thieves, thieves! we shall be murdered.

Mar. Where? Where are they?

Lau. Here, sir, at our chamber-door, and we are run into the balcony for shelter: Dear uncle, come and help us.

Mar. Back again quickly: I durst have sworn they had been in the garden. 'Tis an *ignis fatuus*, I think, that leads us from one place to another.

[*Exit* MARIO, *and Servants.*

Vio. They are gone. My dear Camillo, make haste, and preserve yourself.

Cam. May our next meeting prove more propitious!

Aur. [*To* BENITO.] Come, sirrah, I shall make you sing another note when you are at home.

Ben. Such another word, and I 'll sing again.

Aur. Set the ladder, and mount first, you rogue.

Ben. Mount first yourself, and fear not my delaying.

If I am caught, they 'll spare me for my playing.

[*Sings as he goes off.*

Vous entendrez parler d'amour. [*Exeunt.*

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ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Front of the Nunnery.*

ASCANIO, *and* HIPPOLITA, *at the Grate.*

Hip. I see you have kept touch, brother.

Asca. As a man of honour ought, sister, when he is challenged. And now, according to the laws of duel, the next thing is to strip, and, instead of seconds, to search one another.

Hip. We will strip our hands, if you please, brother; for they are the only weapons we must use.

Asca. That were to invite me to my loss, sister; I could have made a full meal in the world, and you would have me take up with hungry commons in the cloister. Pray mend my fare, or I am gone.

Hip. O, brother, a hand in a cloister is fare like flesh in Spain;* 'tis delicate, because 'tis scarce. You may be satisfied with a hand, as well as I am pleased with the courtship of a boy.

Asca. You may begin with me, sister, as Milo did; by carrying a calf first, you may learn to carry an ox hereafter. In the meantime produce your hand, I understand nun's flesh better than you imagine: Give it me, you shall see how I will worry it. [*She gives her hand.*] Now could not we thrust out our lips, and contrive a kiss too?

Hip. Yes, we may; but I have had the experience of it: It will be but half flesh, half iron.

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* [The spare living of the Spaniards and their observation of Church rules being equally notorious.—ED.]

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Asca. Let's try, however.

Hip. Hold, Lucretia's here.

Asca. Nay, if you come with odds upon me, 'tis time to call seconds. [ASCANIO *hems.*

The Prince and LUCRETIA *appear.*

Luc. Sir, though your song was pleasant, yet there was one thing amiss in it,—that was, your rallying of religion.

Fred. Do you speak well of my friend Love, and I 'll try to speak well of your friend Devotion.

Luc. I can never speak well of love: 'Twas to avoid it that I entered here.

Fred. Then, madam, you have met your man; for, to confess the truth to you, I have but counterfeited love, to try you; for I never yet could love any woman: and since I have seen you, and do not, I am certain now I shall 'scape for ever.

Luc. You are the best man in the world, if you continue this resolution. Pray, then, let us vow solemnly these two things: the first, to esteem each other better than we do all the world besides; the next, never to change our amity to love.

Fred. Agreed, madam. Shall I kiss your hand on it?

Luc. That is too like a lover; or, if it were not, the narrowness of the grate will excuse the ceremony.

Hip. No, but it will not, to my knowledge: I have tried every bar many a fair time over; and at last have found out one, where a hand may get through, and be gallanted.

Luc. [*Giving her hand.*] There, sir, 'tis a true one.

Fred. [*Kissing it.*] This, then, is a seal to our perpetual friendship, and defiance to all love.

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Luc. That seducer of virtue.

Fred. That disturber of quiet.

Luc. That madness of youth.

Fred. That dotage of old age.

Luc. That enemy to good humour.

Fred. And, to conclude all, that reason of all unreasonable actions.

Asca. This doctrine is abominable; do not believe it, sister.

Hip. No; if I do, brother, may I never have comfort from sweet youth at my extremity.

Luc. But remember one article of our friendship, that though we banish love, we do not mirth, nor gallantry; for I declare, I am for all extravagancies, but just loving.

Fred. Just my own humour; for I hate gravity and melancholy next to love.

Asca. Now it comes into my head, the Duke of Mantua makes an entertainment to-night in masquerade: If you love extravagancy so well, madam, I 'll put you into the head of one; lay by your nunship for an hour or two, and come amongst us in disguise.

Fred. My boy is in the right, madam. Will you venture? I 'll furnish you with masking-habits.

Hip. O my dear sister, never refuse it; I keep the keys, you know: I 'll warrant you we will return before we are missed. I do so long to have one fling into the sweet world again, before I die. Hang it, at worst, it is but one sin more, and then we will repent for all together.

Asca. But if I catch you in the world, sister, I 'll make you have a better opinion of the flesh and the devil for ever after.

Luc. If it were known, I were lost for ever.

Fred. How should it be known? You have

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her on your side, there, that keeps the keys: And, put the worst, that you are taken in the world, the world is a good world to stay in; and there are certain occasions of waking in a morning, that may be more pleasant to you than your matins.

Luc. Fie, friend, these extravagancies are a breach of articles in our friendship. But well, for once, I 'll venture to go out: Dancing and singing are but petty transgressions.

Asca. My lord, here is company approaching; we shall be discovered.

Fred. Adieu, then, *jusqu'à revoir;* Ascanio shall be with you immediately, to conduct you.

Asca. How will you disguise, sister? Will you be a man or a woman?

Hip. A woman, brother page, for life: I should have the strangest thoughts if I once wore breeches.

Asca. A woman, say you? Here is my hand, if I meet you in place convenient, I 'll do my best to make you one. [*Exeunt.*

Enter AURELIAN *and* CAMILLO.

Cam. But why thus melancholy, with hat pulled down, and the hand on the region of the heart, just the reverse of my friend Aurelian, of happy memory?

Aur. Faith, Camillo, I am ashamed of it, but cannot help it.

Cam. But to be in love with a waiting-woman! with an eater of fragments, a simperer at lower end of a table, with mighty golls,* rough-grained, and red with starching, those discouragers and abaters of elevated love!

* ["Hands."—ED.]

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Aur. I could love deformity itself, with that good humour. She, who is armed with gaiety and wit, needs no other weapon to conquer me.

Cam. We lovers are the great creators of wit in our mistresses. For Beatrix, she is a mere utterer of yes and no, and has no more sense than what will just dignify her to be an arrant waiting-woman; that is, to lie for her lady, and take your money.

Aur. It may be, then, I found her in the exaltation of her wit; for certainly women have their good and ill days of talking, as they have of looking.

Cam. But, however, she has done you the courtesy to drive out Laura; and so one poison has expelled the other.

Aur. Troth, not absolutely neither; for I dote on Laura's beauty, and on Beatrix's wit: I am wounded with a forked arrow, which will not easily be got out.

Cam. Not to lose time in fruitless complaints, let us pursue our new contrivance, that you may see your two mistresses, and I my one.

Aur. That will not now be difficult: This plot 's so laid, that I defy the devil to make it miss. The woman of the house, by which they are to pass to church, is bribed; the ladies are by her acquainted with the design; and we need only to be there before them, and expect the prey, which will undoubtedly fall into the net.

Cam. Your man is made safe, I hope, from doing us any mischief?

Aur. He has disposed of himself, I thank him, for an hour or two: The fop would make me believe, that an unknown lady is in love with him, and has made him an assignation.

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Cam. If he should succeed now, I should have the worse opinion of the sex for his sake.

Aur. Never doubt but he will succeed: Your brisk fool, that can make a leg, is ever a fine gentleman among the ladies, because he is just of their talent, and they understand him better than a wit.

Cam. Peace, the ladies are coming this way to the chapel, and their jailer with them: Let them go by without saluting, to avoid suspicion; and let us go off to prepare our engine.

Enter MARIO, LAURA, *and* VIOLETTA.

Aur. I must have a look before we go. Ah, you little divine rogue! I 'll be with you immediately. [*Exeunt* AURELIAN *and* CAMILLO.

Vio. Look you, sister, there are our friends, but take no notice.

Lau. I saw them. Was not that Aurelian with Camillo?

Vio. Yes.

Lau. I like him strangely. If his person were joined with Benito's wit, I know not what would become of my poor heart.

Enter FABIO, *and whispers with* MARIO.

Mar. Stay, nieces, I 'll but speak a word with Fabio, and go with you immediately.

Vio. I see, sister, you are infinitely taken with Benito's wit; but I have heard he is a very conceited coxcomb.

Lau. They, who told you so, were horribly mistaken. You shall be judge yourself, Violetta; for to confess frankly to you, I have made him a kind of an appointment.

Vio. How! have you made an assignation to

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Benito? A serving-man! a trencher-carrying rascal!

Lau. Good words, Violetta! I only sent to him from an unknown lady near this chapel, that I might view him in passing by, and see if his person were answerable to his conversation.

Vio. But how will you get rid of my uncle?

Lau. You see my project; his man Fabio is bribed by me, to hold him in discourse.

Enter BENITO, *looking about him.*

Vio. In my conscience this is he. Lord, what a monster of a man is there! with such a worki-day rough-hewn face too! for, faith, heaven has not bestowed the finishing upon it.

Lau. It is impossible this should be Benito; yet he stalks this way. From such a piece of animated timber, sweet heaven deliver me!

Ben. [*Aside.*] This must of necessity be the lady who is in love with me. See, how she surveys my person! certainly one wit knows another by instinct. By that old gentleman, it should be the lady Laura too. Hum! Benito, thou art made for ever.

Lau. He has the most unpromising face, for a wit, I ever saw; and yet he had need have a very good one, to make amends for his face. I am half cured of him already.

Ben. What means all this surveying, madam? You bristle up to me, and wheel about me, like a turkey-cock that is making love: Faith, how do you like my person, ha?

Lau. I dare not praise it, for fear of the old compliment, that you should tell me, it is at my service. But, pray, is your name Benito?

Ben. Signior Benito, at your service, madam.

Lau. And have you no brother, or any other

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of your name; one that is a wit, attending on signior Aurelian?

Ben. No, I can assure your ladyship; I myself am the only wit, who does him the honour,—not to attend him, but—to bear him company.

Lau. But sure it was another you, that waited on Camillo in the garden, last night?

Ben. It was no other me, but me signior Benito.

Lau. 'Tis impossible.

Ben. 'Tis most certain.

Lau. Then I would advise you to go thither again, and look for the wit which you have left there, for you have brought very little along with you. Your voice, methinks, too, is much altered.

Ben. Only a little overstrained, or so, with singing.

Lau. How slept you, after your adventure?

Ben. Faith, lady, I could not sleep one wink, for dreaming of you.

Lau. Not sleep for dreaming? When the place falls, you shall be bull-master-general at court.

Ben. *Et tu, Brute!* Do you mistake me for a fool too? Then, I find, there 's one more of that opinion, besides my master.

Vio. Sister, look to yourself, my uncle is returning.

Lau. I am glad on 't: He has done my business: He has absolutely cured me. Lord, that I could be so mistaken!

Vio. I told you what he was.

Lau. He was quite another thing last night: Never was man so altered in four-and-twenty hours. A pure clown, mere elementary earth, without the least spark of soul in him!

Ben. But, tell me truly, are not you in love with me? Confess the truth: I love plain-dealing: You shall not find me refractory.

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Lau. Away, thou animal! I have found thee out for a high and mighty fool, and so I leave thee.

Mar. Come, now I am ready for you; as little devotion, and as much good huswifery as you please. Take example by me: I assure you, nobody debauches me to church, except it be in your company. [*Exeunt.*

Manet BENITO.

Ben. I am undone for ever: What shall I do with myself? I 'll run into some desert, and there I 'll hide my opprobrious head. No, hang it, I won't neither; all wits have their failings sometimes, and have the fortune to be thought fools once in their lives. Sure this is but a copy of her countenance; for my heart is true to me, and whispers to me, she loves me still. Well, I 'll trust in my own merits, and be confident.

[*A noise of throwing down water within.*

Enter MARIO, FABIO, LAURA, *and* VIOLETTA.

Lau. [*Shaking her clothes.*] O, sir, I am wet quite through my clothes, and am not able to endure it.

Vio. Was there ever such an insolence?

Mar. Send in to see who lives there: I 'll make an example of them.

Enter FRONTONA.

Fab. Here is the woman of the house herself, sir.

Fron. Sir, I submit, most willingly, to any punishment you shall inflict upon me: For, though I intended nothing of an affront to these sweet ladies, yet I can never forgive myself the misfortune, of which I was the innocent occasion.

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Vio. O, I am ready to faint away!

Fron. Alas, poor sweet lady, she 's young and tender, sir. I beseech you, give me leave to repair my offence, with offering myself, and poor house, for her accommodation.

Ben. I know that woman: There 's some villanous plot in this, I 'll lay my life on 't. Now, Benito, cast about for thy credit, and recover all again.

Mar. Go into the coach, nieces, and bid the coachman drive apace. As for you, mistress, your smooth tongue shall not excuse you.

Lau. By your favour, sir, I 'll accept of the gentlewoman's civility; I cannot stir a step further.

Fron. Come in, sweet buds of beauty, you shall have a fire in an inner chamber; and if you please to repose yourself a while, sir, in another room, they shall come out, and wait on you immediately.

Mar. Well, it must be so.

Fron. [*Whispering the Ladies.*] Your friends are ready in the garden, and will be with you as soon as we have shaken off your uncle.

Ben. A cheat, a cheat! a rank one! I smell it, old sir, I smell it.

Mar. What 's the matter with the fellow? Is he distracted?

Ben. No, 'tis you are more likely to be distracted, but that there goes some wit to the being mad; and you have not the least grain of wit, to be gulled thus grossly.

Fron. What does the fellow mean?

Ben. The fellow means to detect your villany, and to recover his lost reputation of a wit.

Fron. Why, friend, what villany? I hope my house is a civil house.

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Ben. Yes, a very civil one; for my master lay in of his last clap there, and was treated very civilly, to my knowledge.

Mar. How 's this, how 's this?

Fron. Come, you are a dirty fellow, and I am known to be a person that——

Ben. Yes, you are known to be a person that——

Fron. Speak your worst of me; what person am I known to be?

Ben. Why, if you will have it, you are little better than a procuress: You carry messages betwixt party and party:—And, in one word, sir, she 's as arrant a fruit-woman * as any is about Rome.

Mar. Nay, if she be a fruit-woman, my nieces shall not enter her doors.

Ben. You had best let them enter, you do not know how they may fructify in her house: For I heard her, with these ears, whisper to them, that their friends were within call.

Mar. This is palpable, this is manifest; I shall remember you, lady fruiterer; I shall have your baskets searched when you bring oranges again.—Come away, nieces; and thanks, honest fellow, for thy discovery.

[*Exeunt* MARIO *and Women.*

Ben. Hah coragio! Il diavolo e morto: Now, I think I have tickled it; this discovery has reinstated me into the empire of my wit again. Now, in the pomp of this achievement, will I present myself before madam Laura, with a

* [The bad repute of fruit-sellers, and especially orange-girls, appears often. Thus in the famous escapade of "La belle Jennings" and Miss Price (*Mémoires de Grammont,* ch. xii.), the elder of the two seems to have been taken, as a matter of course, for a procuress.—ED.]

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—Behold, madam, the happy restoration of Benito!

Enter AURELIAN, CAMILLO, *and* FRONTONA, *overhearing him.*

Oh, now, that I had the mirror, to behold myself in the fulness of my glory! and, oh that the domineering fop, my master, were in presence, that I might triumph over him! that I might even contemn the wretched wight, the mortal of a grovelling soul, and of a debased understanding. [*He looks about him, and sees his master.*] How the devil came these three together? Nothing vexes me, but that I must stand bare to him, after such an enterprise as this is.

Aur. Nay, put on, put on again, sweet sir; why should you be uncovered before the fop your master, the wretched wight, the mortal of a grovelling soul?

Ben. Ay, sir, you may make bold with yourself at your own pleasure: But, for all that, a little bidding would make me take your counsel, and be covered, as affairs go now.

Aur. If it be lawful for a man of a debased understanding to confer with such an exalted wit, pray what was that glorious achievement, which rapt you into such an ecstasy?

Ben. 'Tis a sign you know well how matters go, by your asking me so impertinent a question.

Aur. [*Putting off his hat to him.*] Sir, I beg of you, as your most humble master, to be satisfied.

Ben. Your servant, sir: at present I am not at leisure for conference. But hark you, sir, by the way of friendly advice, one word: Henceforward, tell me no more of the adventure of the garden, nor of the great looking-glass.

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Aur. You mean the mirror.

Ben. Yes, the mirror; tell me no more of that, except you could behold in it a better, a more discreet, or a more able face for stratagem, than I can, when I look there.

Aur. But, to the business; What is this famous enterprise?

Ben. Be satisfied, without troubling me further, the business is done, the rogues are defeated, and your mistress is secured: If you would know more, demand it of that criminal [*Pointing to* FRON.], and ask her, how she dares appear before you, after such a signal treachery, or before me, after such an overthrow?

Fron. I know nothing, but only that, by your master's order, I was to receive the two ladies into my house, and you prevented it.

Ben. By my master's order? I 'll never believe it. This is your stratagem, to free yourself, and defraud me of my reward.

Cam. I 'll witness what she says is true.

Ben. I am deaf to all asseverations, that make against my honour.

Aur. I 'll swear it then. We two were the two rogues, and you the discoverer of our villany.

Ben. Then, woe, woe, to poor Benito! I find my abundance of wit has ruined me.

Aur. But come a little nearer: I would not receive a good office from a servant, but I would reward him for his diligence.

Ben. Virtue, sir, is its own reward: I expect none from you.

Aur. Since it is so, sir, you shall lose no further time in my service: Henceforward, pray know me for your humble servant; for your master I am resolved to be no longer.

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Ben. Nay, rather than so, sir, I beseech you let a good, honest, sufficient beating atone the difference.

Aur. 'Tis in vain.

Ben. I am loth to leave you without a guide.

Aur. He 's at it again! do you hear, Camillo?

Cam. Pr'ythee, Aurelian, be mollified, and beat him.

Fron. Pray, sir, hear reason, and lay it on, for my sake.

Aur. I am obdurate.

Cam. But what will your father say, if you part with him?

Aur. I care not.

Ben. Well, sir, since you are so peremptory, remember I have offered you satisfaction, and so long my conscience is at ease. What a devil, before I 'll offer myself twice to be beaten, by any master in Christendom, I 'll starve, and that is my resolution; and so your servant that was, sir.

[*Exit.*

Aur. I am glad I am rid of him; he was my evil genius, and was always appearing to me, to blast my undertakings: Let me send him never so far off, the devil would be sure to put him in my way, when I had anything to execute. Come, Camillo, now we have changed the dice, it may be we shall have better fortune. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter the Duke of Mantua in masquerade, FREDERICK, VALERIO, *and others. On the other side, enter* LUCRETIA, HIPPOLITA, *and* ASCANIO.

Luc. [*To* ASCA.] The prince I know already,

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by your description of his masking habit; but which is the duke, his father?

Asca. He whom you see talking with the prince, and looking this way. I believe he has observed us.

Luc. If he has not, I am resolved we 'll make ourselves as remarkable as we can: I 'll exercise my talent of dancing.

Hip. And I mine of singing.

Duke. [*To* FRED.] Do you know the company which came in last?

Fred. I cannot possibly imagine who they are.— At least I will not tell you. [*Aside.*

Duke. There 's something very uncommon in the air of one of them.

Fred. Please you, sir, I 'll discourse with her, and see if I can satisfy your highness.

Duke. Stay, there 's a dance beginning, and she seems as if she would make one.

SONG AND DANCE.

Long betwixt love and fear Phyllis, tormented,
Shunned her own wish, yet at last she consented.
But loth that day should her blushes discover,
Come, gentle night, she said,
Come quickly to my aid,
And a poor shamefaced maid
Hide from her lover.

Now cold as ice I am, now hot as fire,
I dare not tell myself my own desire;
But let day fly away, and let night haste her:
Grant, ye kind powers above,
Slow hours to parting love;
But when to bliss we move,
Bid them fly faster.

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How sweet it is to love, when I discover
That fire, which burns my heart, warming my lover!
'Tis pity love so true should be mistaken:
But if this night he be
False or unkind to me,
Let me die, ere I see
That I'm forsaken.

Duke. [*After the dance.*] My curiosity redoubles; I must needs hail that unknown vessel, and inquire whither she 's bound, and what freight she carries.

Fred. She 's not worth your trouble, sir: She 'll either prove some common courtesan in disguise, or, at best, some homely person of honour, that only dances well enough to invite a sight of herself, and would look ill enough to fright you.

Duke. That 's maliciously said; all I see of her is charming, and I have reason to think her face is of the same piece; at least I 'll try my fortune.

Fred. What an unlucky accident is this! If my father should discover her, she 's ruined: If he does not, yet I have lost her conversation to-night.

Duke approaches LUCRETIA.

Asca. 'Tis the duke himself, who comes to court you.

Luc. Peace, I 'll fit him; for I have been informed, to the least tittle, of his actions since he came to town.

Duke. [*To* LUC.] Madam, the duke of Mantua, whom you must needs imagine to be in this company, has sent me to you, to know what kind of face there is belonging to that excellent shape,

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and to those charming motions, which he observed so lately in your dancing.

Luc. Tell his highness, if you please, that there is a face within the mask, so very deformed, that, if it were discovered, it would prove the worst visor of the two; and that, of all men, he ought not to desire it should be exposed, because then something would be found amiss in an entertainment, which he has made so splendid and magnificent.

Duke. The duke, I am sure, would be very proud of your compliment, but it would leave him more unsatisfied than before; for he will find in it so much of gallantry, as, being added to your other graces, will move him to a strange temptation of knowing you.

Luc. I should still have the same reason to refuse him; for 'twere a madness, when I had charmed him by my motion and converse, to hazard the loss of that conquest by my eyes.

Duke. I am on fire 'till I discover her. [*Aside.*] —At least, madam, tell me of what family you are.

Luc. Will you be satisfied, if I tell you I am of the Colonne? You have seen Julia of that house?

Duke. Then you are she.

Luc. Have I not her stature most exactly?

Duke. As near as I remember.

Luc. But, by your favour, I have nothing of her shape; for, if I may be so vain to praise myself, she's a little thicker in the shoulders, and, besides, she moves ungracefully.

Duke. Then you are not she again.

Luc. No, not she: But you have forgotten Emilia of the Ursini, whom the duke saluted yesterday at her balcony, when he entered. Her air and motion——

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Duke. Are the very same with yours. Now I am sure I know you.

Luc. But there 's too little of her to make a beauty: My stature is more advantageous.

Duke. You have cozened me again.

Luc. Well, I find at last I must confess myself: What think you of Eugenia Beata? The duke seemed to be infinitely pleased last night, when my brother presented me to him at the Belvidere.

Duke. Now I am certain you are she, for you have both her stature and her motion.

Luc. But, if you remember yourself a little better, there 's some small difference in our wit; for she has indeed the air and beauty of a Roman lady, but all the dulness of a Dutch woman.

Duke. I see, madam, you are resolved to conceal yourself, and I am as fully resolved to know you.

Luc. See which of our resolutions will take place.

Duke. I come from the duke, and can assure you, he is of an humour to be obeyed.

Luc. And I am of an humour not to obey him. But why should he be so curious?

Duke. If you would have my opinion, I believe he is in love with you.

Luc. Without seeing me?

Duke. Without seeing all of you: Love is love, let it wound us from what part it please; and if he have enough from your shape and conversation, his business is done, the more compendiously, without the face.

Luc. But the duke cannot be taken with my conversation, for he never heard me speak.

Duke. [*Aside.*] 'Slife, I shall discover myself.

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—Yes, madam, he stood by *incognito*, and heard me speak with you: But——

Luc. I wish he had trusted to his own courtship, and spoke himself; for it gives us a bad impression of a prince's wit, when we see fools in favour about his person.

Duke. Whatever I am, I have it in commission from him to tell you, he 's in love with you.

Luc. The good old gentleman may dote, if he so pleases; but love, and fifty years old, are stark nonsense.

Duke. But some men, you know, are green at fifty.

Luc. Yes, in their understandings.

Duke. You speak with great contempt of a prince, who has some reputation in the world.

Luc. No; 'tis you that speak with contempt of him, by saying he is in love at such an age.

Duke. Then, madam, 'tis necessary you should know him better for his reputation; and that shall be, though he violate the laws of masquerade, and force you.

Fred. I suspected this from his violent temper. [*Aside.*] Sir, the emperor's ambassador is here in masquerade, and I believe this to be his lady: It were well if you inquired of him, before you forced her to discover.

Duke. Which is the ambassador?

Fred. That furthermost.

[*Duke retires further.*

Fred. to *Luc.* Take your opportunity to escape, while his back is turned, or you are ruined. Ascanio, wait on her.

Luc. I am so frighted, I cannot stay to thank you. [*Exeunt* Luc. Asca. *and* Hip.

Duke to *Fred.* 'Tis a mistake, the ambassador knows nothing of her: I 'm resolved I 'll know

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it of herself, ere she shall depart.—Ha! Where is she? I left her here.

Fred. [*Aside.*] Out of your reach, father mine, I hope.

Duke. She has either shifted places, or else slipped out of the assembly.

Fred. I have looked round: She must be gone, sir.

Duke. She must not be gone, sir. Search for her everywhere: I will have her.

Fred. Has she offended your highness?

Duke. Peace with your impertinent questions. Come hither, Valerio.

Val. Sir?

Duke. O, Valerio, I am desperately in love: That lady, with whom you saw me talking, has ——But I lose time; she's gone; haste after her,—find her,—bring her back to me.

Val. If it be possible.

Duke. It must be possible; the quiet of my life depends upon it.

Val. Which way took she?

Duke. Go any way,—every way; ask no questions: I know no more, but that she must, —must be had. [*Exit* VALERIO.

Fred. Sir, the assembly will observe, that——

Duke. Damn the assembly; 'tis a dull insignificant crowd, now she is not here: Break it up, I 'll stay no longer.

Fred. [*Aside.*] I hope she's safe, and then this fantastic love of my father's will make us sport to-morrow. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Enter LUCRETIA, ASCANIO, *and* HIPPOLITA.

Luc. Now that we are safe at the gate of our

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convent, methinks the adventure was not unpleasant.

Hip. And now that I am out of danger, brother, I may tell you what a novice you are in love, to tempt a young sister into the wide world, and not to show her the difference betwixt that and her cloister. I find I may venture safely with you another time.

Asca. O, sister, you play the brazen-head with me,—you give me warning when time's past. But that was no fit opportunity: I hate to snatch a morsel of love, and so away. I am for a set-meal, where I may enjoy my full gust; but, when I once fall on, you shall find me a brave man upon occasion.

Luc. 'Tis time we were in our cells. Quick, Hippolita; where's the key?

Hip. Here, in my pocket—No, 'tis in my other pocket:—Ha, 'tis not there neither. I am sure I put it in one of them.

Luc. What should we do, if it should be lost now?

Hip. I have searched myself all over, and cannot find it.

Asca. A woman can never search herself all over; let me search you, sister.

Luc. Is this a time for raillery? O, sweet heaven! Speak comfort quickly; have you found it? [*Here* ASCANIO *slips away.*

Hip. Speak you comfort, madam, and tell me you have it, for I am too sure that I have none on 't.

Luc. O, unfortunate that we are! day's breaking; the handicrafts'* shops begin to open. [*Clock strikes.*

* [= "handicraftsmen's."—ED.]

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Hip. The clock strikes two: Within this half hour we shall be called up to our devotions. Now, good Ascanio——Alas, he's gone too! we are left miserable and forlorn.

Luc. We have not so much as one place in the town for a retreat.

Hip. O, for a miracle in our time of need! that some kind good-natured saint would take us up, and heave us over the wall into our cells.

Luc. Dear sister, pray, for I cannot: I have been so sinful in leaving my cloister for the world, that I am ashamed to trouble my friends above to help me.

Hip. Alas, sister, with what face can I pray then! Yours were but little vanities, but I have sinned swingingly against my vow; yes, indeed, sister, I have been very wicked,—for I wished the ball might be kept perpetually in our cloister, and that half the handsome nuns in it might be turned to men, for the sake of the other.

Luc. Well, if I were free from this disgrace, I would never more set foot beyond the cloister, for the sake of any man.

Hip. And here I vow, if I get safe within my cell, I will not think of man again these seven years.

Re-enter ASCANIO.

Asca. Hold, Hippolita, and make no more rash vows: If you do, as I live, you shall not have the key.

Hip. The key! why, have you it, brother?

Luc. He does but mock us. I know you have it not, Ascanio.

Asca. *Ecce signum;* here it is for you.

Hip. O, sweet brother, let me kiss you.

Asca. Hands off, sweet sister, you must not

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be forsworn; you vowed you would not think of a man these seven years.

Hip. Ay, brother, but I was not so hasty but I had wit enough to cozen the saint to whom I vowed; for you are but a boy, brother, and will not be a man these seven years.

Luc. But where did you find the key, Ascanio?

Asca. To confess the truth, madam, I stole it out of Hippolita's pocket, to take the print of it in wax; for I 'll suppose you 'll give my master leave to wait on you in the nunnery-garden, after your abbess has walked the rounds.

Luc. Well, well, good-morrow. When you have slept, come to the grate for a letter to your lord. Now will I have the headache, or the megrim, or some excuse; for I 'm resolved I 'll not rise to prayers.

Hip. Pray, brother, take care of our masking-habits, that they may be forthcoming another time.

Asca. Sleep, sleep, and dream of me, sister: I 'll make it good, if you dream not too unreasonably.

Luc. Thus dangers in our love make joys more dear;
And pleasure 's sweetest when 'tis mixed with fear. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Dressing-chamber.*

The Masking-habits of LUCRETIA *and* HIPPOLITA *laid in a Chair.—Enter* FREDERICK *and* ASCANIO.

Fred. I never thought I should have loved her. Is 't come to this, after all my boastings and

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declarations against it? Sure I loved her before, and did not know it, till I feared to lose her: There 's the reason. I had never desired her, if my father had not. This is just the longing of a woman: She never finds the appetite in herself, till she sees the meat on another 's plate. I 'm glad, however, you took the impression of the key; but 'twas not well to fright them.

Asca. Sir, I could not help it; but here 's the effect on 't: the workman sat up all night to make it. [*Gives a key.*

Fred. This key will admit me into the seraglio of the godly. The monastery has begun the war, in sallying out upon the world; and therefore 'tis but just that the world should make reprisals on the monastery.

Asca. Alas, sir, you and Lucretia do but skirmish; 'tis I and Hippolita that make the war: 'Tis true, opportunity has been wanting for a battle, but the forces have been stoutly drawn up on both sides. As for your concernment, I come just now from the monastery; and have orders from your Platonic mistress to tell you, she expects you this evening in the garden of the nunnery; withal, she delivered me this letter for you.

Fred. Give it me.

Asca. O, sir, the duke your father!

[*The Prince takes the letter, and, thinking to put it up hastily, drops it.*

Enter Duke.

Duke. Now, Frederick, not abroad yet?

Fred. Your last night's entertainment left me so weary, sir, that I overslept myself this morning.

Duke. I rather envy you than blame you: Our

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sleep is certainly the most pleasant portion of our lives. For my own part, I spent the night waking and restless.

Fred. Has anything of moment happened to discompose your highness?

Duke. I 'll confess my follies to you: I am in love with a lady I saw last night in masquerade.

Fred. 'Tis strange she should conceal herself.

Duke. She has, from my best search; yet I took exact notice of her masking habit, and described it to those whom I employed to find her.

Fred. [*Aside.*] 'Sdeath, it lies there unremoved, and, if he turns himself, full in his eye. Now, now, 'twill be discovered.

Duke. For 'twas extremely remarkable. I remember very well, 'twas a loose long robe, streaked black and white, girt with a large silver ribbon, and the visor was a Moor's face.

Fred. [*Running to the chair where the habits are, sits down.*] Sir, I beg pardon of your highness for this rudeness; I am——O, Oh!——

Duke. What 's the matter?

Fred. I am taken so extremely ill o' the sudden, that I am forced to sit before you.

Duke. Alas, what 's your distemper?

Fred. A most violent griping, which pulls me together on a heap.

Duke. Some cold, I fear, you took last night. [*Runs to the door.*] Who waits there? Call physicians to the prince.

Fred. Ascanio, remove these quickly.

[Ascanio *takes away the habits, and Exit.*

Duke. [*Returning.*] How do you find yourself?

Fred. [*Arising.*] Much better, sir: That which pained me is removed. As it came unexpectedly, so it went as suddenly.

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Enter VALERIO.

Duke. The air, perhaps, will do you good. If you have health, you may see those troops drawn out, which I design for Milan.

Fred. Shall I wait your highness?

Duke. No, leave me here with Valerio; I have a little business, which despatched, I 'll follow you immediately.—Well, what success, Valerio?

[*Exit* FREDERICK.

Val. Our endeavours are in vain, sir; there has been inquiry made about all the palaces in Rome, and neither of the masking habits can be discovered.

Duke. Yet it must be a woman of quality. What paper 's that at my foot?

Val. [*Taking up the letter.*] 'Tis sealed, sir, and directed to the prince.

Duke. [*Taking the letter.*] 'Tis a woman's hand. Has he got a mistress in town so soon? I am resolved to open it, though I do not approve my own curiosity. [*Opens and reads it.*

Now my fear is over, I can laugh at my last night's adventure. I find that at fifty all men grow incorrigible, and lovers especially; for, certainly, never any creature could be worse treated than your father; [How 's this, Valerio? I am amazed.] *and yet the good, old out-of-fashion gentleman heard himself rallied, and bore it with all the patience of a Christian prince.* [Now, 'tis plain, the lady in masquerade is a mistress of my son's, and the undutiful wretch was in the plot to abuse me.] *Ascanio will tell you the latter part of our misfortune, how hardly we got into the cloister.* [A nun, too! Oh, the devil!] *When we meet next, pray provide to*

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laugh heartily; for there is subject sufficient for a plentiful fit, and fop enough to spare for another time. LUCRETIA.

Val. Lucretia! now the mystery is unfolded.

Duke. Do you know her?

Val. When I was last at Rome I saw her often; she is near kinswoman to the present Pope; and, before he placed her in this nunnery of Benedictines, was the most celebrated beauty of the town.

Duke. I know I ought to hate this woman, because she has affronted me thus grossly; but yet, I cannot help it, I must love her.

Val. But, sir, you come on too much disadvantage, to be your son's rival.

Duke. I am deaf to all considerations: Pr'ythee do not think of giving a madman counsel. Pity me, and cure me, if thou canst; but remember, there 's but one infallible medicine,—that 's enjoyment.

Val. I had forgot to tell you, sir, that the governor, Don Mario, is without, to wait on you.

Duke. Desire him to come in.

Enter Don MARIO.

Mar. I am come, sir, to beg a favour from your highness; and 'tis on the behalf of my sister Sophronia, abbess of the Torre di Specchi.

Val. Sir, she 's abbess of that very monastery where your mistress is enclosed.

[*Aside to the Duke.*

Duke. I should be glad to serve any relation of yours, Don Mario.

Mar. Her request is, that you would be pleased to grace her chapel this afternoon. There will be music, and some little ceremony,

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in the reception of my two nieces, who are to be placed on pension there.

Duke. Your nieces, I hear, are fair, and great fortunes.

Mar. Great vexations, I 'm sure they are; being daily haunted by a company of wild fellows, who buzz about my house like flies.

Duke. Your design seems reasonable: women in hot countries are like oranges in cold; to preserve them, they must be perpetually housed. I 'll bear you company to the monastery.—Come, Valerio; this opportunity is happy beyond our expectation. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter CAMILLO *and* AURELIAN.

Cam. He has smarted sufficiently for this offence. Pr'ythee, dear Aurelian, forgive him. He waits without, and appears penitent; I 'll be responsible for his future carriage.

Aur. For your sake, then, I receive him into grace.

Cam. [*At the door.*] Benito, you may appear; your peace is made.

Enter BENITO.

Aur. But it must be upon conditions.

Ben. Any conditions, that are reasonable; for, as I am a wit, sir, I have not eaten——

Aur. You are in the path of perdition already; that 's the principal of our conditions, you are to be a wit no more.

Ben. Pray, sir, if it be possible, let me be a little wit still.

Aur. No, sir; you can make a leg, and dance;

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those are no talents of a wit: you are cut out for a brisk fool, and can be no other.

Ben. Pray, sir, let me think I am a wit, or my heart will break.

Cam. That you will naturally do, as you are a fool.

Aur. Then no further meddling with adventures, or contrivances of your own; they are all belonging to the territories of wit, from whence you are banished.

Ben. But what if my imagination should really furnish me with some——

Aur. Not a plot, I hope?

Ben. No, sir, no plot; but some expedient then, to mollify the word, when your invention has failed you?

Aur. Think it a temptation of the devil, and believe it not.

Ben. Then farewell all the happiness of my life.

Cam. You know your doom, Benito; and now you may take your choice, whether you will renounce wit, or eating.

Ben. Well, sir, I must continue my body, at what rate soever: and the rather, because now there 's no further need of me in your adventures; for I was assured by Beatrix, this morning, that her two mistresses are to be put in pension,* in the nunnery of Benedictines, this afternoon.

Cam. Then I am miserable.

Aur. And you have deferred the telling it, till it is past time to study for prevention.

Cam. Let us run thither immediately, and either perish in 't, or free them. You 'll assist me with your sword?

---

* ["in pension" = *en pension*, a Gallicism only excusable in that the thing expressed was not English.—Ed.]

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Aur. Yes, if I cannot do it to more purpose with my counsel. Let us first play the fairest of our game; 'tis time enough to snatch when we have lost it. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Chapel.*

The DUKE, VALERIO, *Attendants. At the other door,* LAURA, VIOLETTA, BEATRIX, MARIO. *Instrumental and vocal music; in the time of which, enter* AURELIAN *and* CAMILLO. *After the music, enter* SOPHRONIA, LUCRETIA, HIPPOLITA, *and other Nuns.*

Duke. [*To* VALERIO, *who had whispered to him.*] I needed not those marks to know her. She's one continued excellence; she's all over miracle.

Soph. [*To the* DUKE.] We know, sir, we are not capable, by our entertainment, of adding anything to your pleasures; and therefore we must attribute this favour of your presence to your piety and devotion.

Duke. You have treated me with harmony so excellent, that I believed myself among a choir of angels; especially when I beheld so fair a troop behind you.

Soph. Their beauty, sir, is wholly dedicated to heaven, and is no way ambitious of a commendation, which, from your mouth, might raise a pride in any other of the sex.

Cam. I am impatient, and can bear no longer. Let what will happen——

Aur. Do you not see your ruin inevitable? Draw in a holy place! and in the presence of the Duke!

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Mar. I do not like Camillo's being here: I must cut short the ceremony.

[*Whispers* SOPHRONIA.

Soph. [*To* LAURA *and* VIOLETTA.] Come, fair cousins, we hope to make the cloistral life so pleasing, that it may be an inducement to you to quit the wicked world for ever.

Vio. [*Passing by* CAMILLO.] Take that, and read it at your leisure.

[*Conveys a note into his hand.*

Cam. A ticket,* as I live, Aurelian.

Aur. Steal off, and be thankful: if that be my Beatrix with Laura, she 's most confoundedly ugly. If ever we had come to love-work, and a candle had been brought us, I had fallen back from that face, like a buck-rabbit in coupling.

[*Exeunt* CAMILLO *and* AURELIAN.

Soph. Daughters, the time of our devotion calls us.—All happiness to your highness.

Luc. [*To* HIPPOLITA.] Little thinks my venerable old love there, that his mistress in masquerade is so near him. Now do I even long to abuse that fop-gravity again.

Hip. Methinks, he looks on us.

Luc. Farewell, poor love; I am she, I am, for all my demure looks, that treated thee so inhumanly last night.

[*She is going off, after* SOPHRONIA.

Duke. [*Following her.*] Stay, lady; I would speak with you.

Luc. Ah! [*Shrieking.*

Soph. How now, daughter? What 's the meaning of that indecent noise you make?

Luc. [*Aside.*] If I speak to him, he will discover my voice, and then I am ruined.

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* ["ticket" = *billet*, another Gallicism.—ED.]

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Duke. If your name be Lucretia, I have some business of concernment with you.

Luc. [*To* SOPHRONIA.] Dear madam, for heaven's sake make haste into the cloister; the duke pursues me on some ill design.

Soph. [*To the* DUKE.] 'Tis not permitted, sir, for maids, once entered into religion, to hold discourses here of worldly things.

Duke. But my discourses are not worldly, madam;
I had a vision in the dead of night,
Which showed me this fair virgin in my sleep,
And told me, that from her I should be taught
Where to bestow large alms, and great endowments,
On some near monastery.

Soph. Stay, Lucretia;
The holy vision's will must be obeyed.

[*Exeunt* SOPHRONIA *and Nuns.*

Luc. [*Aside.*] He does not know me, sure; and yet I fear religion is the least of his business with me.

Duke. I see, madam, beauty will be beauty in any habit;
Though, I confess, the splendour of a court
Were a much fitter scene for yours, than is
A cloistered privacy.

Luc. [*Counterfeiting her voice.*] The world has no temptations for a mind
So fixed and raised above it;
This humble cell contains and bounds my wishes:
My charity gives you my prayers, and that 's
All my converse with human kind.

Duke. Since when, madam, have the world and you been upon these equal terms of hostility? Time was, you have been better friends.

Luc. No doubt I have been vain, and sinful;

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but the remembrance of those days cannot be pleasant to me now, and therefore, if you please, do not refresh their memory.

Duke. Their memory! you speak as if they were ages past.

Luc. You think me still what I was once—a vain, fond, giddy creature: I see, sir, whither your discourses tend, and therefore take my leave.

Duke. Yes, madam, I know you see whither my discourses tend, and therefore 'twill not be convenient that you should take your leave. Disguise yourself no further; you are known, as well as you knew me in masquerade.

Luc. I am not used enough to the world to interpret riddles; therefore, once more, heaven keep you.

Duke. This will not do; your voice, your mien, your stature, betray you for the same I saw last night: you know the time and place.

Luc. You were not in this chapel, and I am bound by vow to stir no further.

Duke. But you had too much wit to keep that vow.

Luc. If you persist, sir, in this raving madness, I can bring witness of my innocence. [*Is going.*

Duke. To save that labour, see if you know that hand, and let that justify you.

[*Shows her letter.*

Luc What do I see! my ruin is inevitable.

Duke. You know you merit it:
You used me ill, and now are in my power.

Luc. But you, I hope, are much too noble to
Destroy the fame of a poor silly woman?

Duke. Then, in few words,—for I am bred a soldier,
And must speak plain,—it is your love I ask;

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If you deny, this letter is produced;
You know the consequence.
Luc. I hope I do not;
For though there are appearances against me,
Enough to give you hope I durst not shun you,
Yet, could you see my heart, 'tis a white virgin-tablet,
On which no characters of earthly love
Were ever writ: And, 'twixt the prince and me,
If there were any criminal affection,
May heaven this minute——
Duke. Swear not; I believe you:
For, could I think my son had e'er enjoyed you,
I should not be his rival. Since he has not,
I may have so much kindness for myself,
To wish that happiness.
Luc. You ask me what I must not grant,
Nor, if I loved you, would: you know my vow of chastity.
Duke. Yet again that senseless argument?
The vows of chastity can ne'er be broken,
Where vows of secrecy are kept. Those I 'll swear with you.
But 'tis enough at present, you know my resolution.
I would persuade, not force, you to my love;
And to that end I give you this night's respite.
Consider all, that you may fear or hope;
And think that on your grant, or your denial,
Depends a double welfare, yours and mine.
[*Exit.*
Luc. A double ruin, rather, if I grant;
For what can I expect from such a father,
When such a son betrays me! Could I think,
Of all mankind, that Frederick would be base?
And, with the vanity of vulgar souls,

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Betray a virgin's fame? One, who esteemed him,
And I much fear did more than barely so——
But I dare not examine myself further, for fear of confessing to my own thoughts a tenderness of which he is unworthy.

Enter HIPPOLITA.

Hip. I watched till your old gallant was gone, to bring you news of your young one. A mischief on these old dry lovers! they are good for nothing but tedious talking; well, yonder 's the prince at the grate; I hope I need say no more to you.

Luc. I 'll come when I 've recovered myself a little. I am a wretched creature, Hippolita! the letter I writ to the prince——

Hip. I know it,—is fallen into his father's hands by accident. He 's as wretched as you too. Well, well, it shall be my part to bring you together; and then, if two young people, that have opportunity, can be wretched and melancholy——I 'll go before, and meet Ascanio.

[*Exit.*

Luc. I am half unwilling to go, because I must be accessary to her assignation with Ascanio; but, for once, I 'll meet the prince in the garden-walk: I am glad, however, that he is less criminal than I thought him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*The Nunnery-Garden.*

HIPPOLITA, ASCANIO, *meeting* LAURA *and* VIOLETTA.

Hip. I hear some walking this way.—Who goes there?

Lau. We are the two new pensioners, Laura and Violetta.

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Hip. Go in, to your devotion: These undue hours of walking savour too much of worldly thoughts.

Lau. Let us retire to the arbour, where, by this time, I believe, our friends are. Good-night, sister.

Hip. Good angels guard you. [*Exeunt* LAU. *and* VIO.] Now, brother, the coast is clear, and we have the garden to ourselves. Do you remember how you threatened me? But that 's all one, how good soever the opportunity may be, so long as we two resolve to be virtuous.

Asca. Speak for yourself, sister, for I am wickedly inclined. Yet, I confess, I have some remorse, when I consider you are in religion.

Hip. We should do very well to consider that, both of us; for, indeed, what should young people do, but think of goodness and religion; especially when they love one another, and are alone too, brother?

Asca. A curse on 't! here comes my lord, and Lucretia. We might have accomplished all, and been repenting by this time; yet who the devil would have thought they should have come so soon—Ah! [*Sets his teeth.*

Hip. Who the devil would have put it to the venture? This is always the fault of you raw pages: You, that are too young, never use an opportunity; and we, that are elder, can seldom get one.—Ah! [*Sets her teeth.*

Enter FREDERICK *and* LUCRETIA.

Luc. I believe, indeed, it troubled you to lose that letter.

Fred. So much, madam, that I can never forgive myself that negligence.

Luc. Call it not so, 'twas but a casualty,

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though, I confess, the consequence is dangerous; and therefore have not both of us reason to defy love, when we see a little gallantry is able to produce so much mischief?

Fred. [*Aside.*] Now cannot I, for my heart, bring out one word against this love.

Luc. Come, you are mute upon a subject that is both easy and pleasant. A man in love is so ridiculous a creature——

Fred. Especially to those that are not.

Luc. True; for to those that are, he cannot be so: They are like the citizens of Bethlehem,* who never find out one another's madness, because they are all tainted. But for such ancient fops, as, with reverence, your father is, what reason can they have to be in love?

Fred. Nay, your old fop 's unpardonable, that 's certain. But——

Luc. But what? Come, laugh at him.

Fred. But I consider he is my father, I can't laugh at him.

Luc. But, if it were another, we should see how you would insult over him.

Fred. Ay, if it were another——And yet I don't know neither, 'tis no part of good nature to insult: A man may be overtaken with a passion, or so; I know it by myself.

Luc. How, by yourself! You are not in love, I hope?—Oh that he would confess first now! [*Aside.*

Fred. But, if I were, I should be loth to be laughed at.

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* [It is hardly necessary (but perhaps comes just within the duties of an editor) to remind the reader that there is here no scandal against the Judæan village. "Bedlam" removes the ambiguity.—Ed.]

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Luc. Since you are not in love, you may the better counsel me: What shall we do with this same troublesome father of yours?

Fred. Anything, but love him.

Luc. But you know he has me at a bay; my letter is in his possession, and he may produce it to my ruin: Therefore, if I did allow him some little favour, to mollify him——

Fred. How, madam? Would you allow him favours? I can never consent to it: Not the least look or smile; they are all too precious, though they were to save his life.

Luc. What, not your father? Oh that he would confess he loved me first! [*Aside.*

Fred. What have I done? I shall betray myself, and confess my love to be laughed at, by this hard-hearted woman. [*Aside.*] 'Tis true, madam, I had forgot; he is, indeed, my father, and therefore you may use him as kindly as you please.

Luc. He's insensible: Now he enrages me. [*Aside.*] What if he proposes to marry me? I am not yet professed, and 'twould be much to my advantage.

Fred. Marry you! I had rather die a thousand deaths, than suffer it.

Luc. This begins to please me. [*Aside.*
But why should you be so much my enemy?

Fred. Your enemy, madam! Why, do you desire it?

Luc. Perhaps I do.

Fred. Do it, madam, since it pleases you so well.

Luc. But you had rather die, than suffer it.

Fred. No, I have changed my mind: I 'll live, and not be concerned at it.

Luc. Do you contradict yourself so soon?

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Then know, sir, I did intend to do it; and I am glad you have given me advice so agreeable to my inclinations.

Fred. Heaven! that you should not find it out! I delivered your letter on purpose to my father, and 'twas my business, now, to come and mediate for him.

Luc. Pray, then, carry him the news of his good success. Adieu, sweet prince!

Fred. Adieu, dear madam.

Asca. Hey day! what will this come to? They have cozened one another into a quarrel; just like friends in fencing, a chance thrust comes, and then they fall to it in earnest.

Hip. You and I, brother, shall never meet upon even terms, if this be not pieced.—Face about, madam; turn quickly to your man, or, by all that 's virtuous, I 'll call the abbess.

Asca. I must not be so bold with you, sir; but if you please, you may turn towards the lady: and, I suppose, you would be glad I durst speak to you with more authority, to save the credit of your willingness.

Fred. Well, I 'll show her I dare stay, if it be but to confront her malice.

Luc. I am sure I have done nothing to be ashamed of, that I should need to run away.

Asca. Pray give me leave, sir, to ask you but one question; Why were you so unwilling that she should be married to your father?

Fred. Because then her friendship must wholly cease.

Asca. But you may have her friendship, when she is married to him.

Fred. What! when another has enjoyed her?

Asca. *Victoria, Victoria!* he loves you, madam; let him deny it, if he can.

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Luc. Fie, fie, loves me, Ascanio! I hope he would not forswear himself, when he has railed so much against it.

Fred. I hope I may love your mind, madam; I may love spiritually.

Hip. That's enough, that's enough: Let him love the mind without the body, if he can.

Asca. Ay, ay, when the love is once come so far, that spiritual mind will never leave pulling, and pulling, till it has drawn the beastly body after it.

Fred. Well, madam, since I must confess it,—though I expect to be laughed at, after my railing against love,—I do love you all over, both soul and body.

Asca. Lord, sir, what a tigress have you provoked! you may see she takes it to the death, that you have made this declaration.

Hip. I thought where all her anger was: Why do you not rail, madam? Why do you not banish him? the prince expects it; he has dealt honestly, he has told you his mind, and you may make your worst on 't.

Luc. Because he does expect it, I am resolved, I 'll neither satisfy him nor you: I will neither rail nor laugh: Let him make his worst of that, now.

Fred. If I understand you right, madam, I am happy beyond either my deserts or expectation.

Luc. You may give my words what interpretation you please, sir; I shall not envy you their meaning in the kindest sense. But we are near the jessamine walk, there we may talk with greater freedom, because 'tis further from the house.

Fred. I wait you, madam. [*Exeunt.*

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SCENE V.

AURELIAN, *with a dark lanthorn.* CAMILLO *and* BENITO.

Cam. So, we are safe got over into the nunnery-garden; for what 's to come, trust love and fortune.

Aur. This must needs be the walk she mentioned; yet, to be sure, I 'll hold the lanthorn while you read the ticket.

Cam. [Reads.] *I prepared this ticket, hoping to see you in the chapel: Come this evening over the garden wall, on the right hand, next the Tiber.*

Aur. We are right, I see.

Cam. *Bring only your discreet Benito with you, and I will meet you attended by my faithful Beatrix.* VIOLETTA.

Ben. Discreet Benito! Did you hear, sir?

Aur. Mortify thyself for that vain thought; and, without inquiring into the mystery of these words, which I assure thee were not meant to thee, plant thyself by that ladder without motion, to secure our retreat; and be sure to make no noise.

Ben. But, sir, in case that——

Aur. Honest Benito, no more questions: *Basta* is the word. Remember, thou art only taken with us, because thou hast a certain evil dæmon, who conducts thy actions, and would have been sure, by some damned accident or other, to have brought thee hither to disturb us.

Cam. I hear whispering not far from us, and I think 'tis Violetta's voice.

Aur. [*To* BEN.] Retire to your post; avoid, good Satan. [*Exit* BEN.

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Enter LAURA, *with a dark lanthorn hid, and* VIOLETTA.

Cam. Ours is the honour of the field, madam; we are here before you.

Vio. Softly, dear friend; I think I hear some walking in the garden.

Cam. Rather, let us take this opportunity for your escape from hence; all things are here in readiness.

Vio. This is the second time we ever have met; let us discourse, and know each other better first; that 's the way to make sure of some love beforehand; for, as the world goes, we know not how little we may have when we are married.

Cam. Losses of opportunity are fatal in war, you know, and love 's a kind of warfare.

Vio. I shall keep you yet a while from close fighting.

Cam. But, do you know what an hour in love is worth? 'Tis more precious than an age of ordinary life; 'tis the very quintessence and extract of it.

Vio. I do not like your chemical preparation of love; yours is all spirit, and will fly too soon; I must see it fixed, before I trust you. But we are near the arbour: Now our out-guards are set, let us retire a little, if you please; there we may walk more freely. [*Exit.*

Aur. [*To* LAU.] My lady's woman, methinks you are very reserved to-night: Pray, advance into the lists; though I have seen your countenance by day, I can endure to hear you talk by night. Be cunning, and set your wit to show which is your best commodity: It will help the better to put off that drug, your face.

Lau. The coarsest ware will serve such custo-

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mers as you are: Let it suffice, Mr. Serving-man, that I have seen you too. Your face is the original of the ugliest vizors about town; and for wit, I would advise you to speak reverently of it, as a thing you are never like to understand.

Aur. Sure, Beatrix, you came lately from looking in your glass, and that has given you a bad opinion of all faces; but since when am I become so notorious a fool?

Lau. Since yesterday; for t'other night you talked like a man of sense: I think your wit comes to you, as the sight of owls does, only in the dark.

Aur. Why, when did you discourse by day with me?

Lau. You have a short memory. This afternoon, in the great street. Do you remember when you talked with Laura?

Aur. But what was that to Beatrix?

Lau. [*Aside.*] 'Slife, I had forgot that I am Beatrix. But pray, when did you find me out to be so ugly?

Aur. This afternoon, in the chapel.

Lau. That cannot be; for I well remember you were not there, Benito: I saw none but Camillo, and his friend, the handsome stranger.

Aur. [*Aside.*] Curse on't, I have betrayed myself.

Lau. I find you are an impostor: you are not the same Benito: your language has nothing of the serving-man.

Aur. And yours, methinks, has not much of the waiting-woman.

Lau. My lady is abused, and betrayed by you: But I am resolved, I'll discover who you are. [*Holds out a lanthorn to him.*] How! the stranger?

Aur. Nay, madam, if you are good at that,

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I 'll match you there too. [*Holds out his lanthorn.*] O prodigy! Is Beatrix turned to Laura?

Lau. Now the question is, which of us two is the greatest cheat?

Aur. That's hardly to be tried, at so short warning: Let 's marry one another, and then, twenty to one, in a twelvemonth we shall know.

Lau. Marry! Are you at that so soon, signior? Benito and Beatrix, I confess, had some acquaintance; but Aurelian and Laura are mere strangers.

Aur. That ground I have gotten as Benito, I am resolved I 'll keep as Aurelian. If you will take state upon you, I have treated you with ceremony already; for I have wooed you by proxy.

Lau. But you would not be contented to bed me so; or give me leave to put the sword betwixt us.

Aur. Yes, upon condition you 'll remove it.

Lau. Pray let our friends be judge of it; if you please, we 'll find them in the arbour.

Aur. Content; I am then sure of the verdict, because the jury is bribed already. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

BENITO *meeting* FREDERICK, ASCANIO, LUCRETIA *and* HIPPOLITA.

Ben. Knowing my own merits, as I do, 'tis not impossible, but some of these harlotry nuns may love me. Oh, here 's my master! now if I could but put this into civil terms, so as to ask his leave, and not displease him——

Asca. I hear one talking, sir, just by us.

Ben. I am stolen from my post, sir, but for one minute only, to demand permission of you,

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since it is not in our articles, that if any of these nuns should cast an eye, or so——

Fred. 'Slife, we are betrayed; but I 'll make this rascal sure. [*Draws and runs at him.*

Ben. Help! murder, murder! [*Runs off.*

Enter AURELIAN *and* CAMILLO; LAURA *and* VIOLETTA *after them.*

Aur. That was Benito's voice: We are ruined.

Cam. O, here they are, we must make our way.

[AUR. *and the Prince make a pass or two confusedly, and fight off the stage. The Women shriek.*

Asca. Never fear, ladies.—Come on, sir; I am your man.

Cam. [*Stepping back.*] This is the prince's page, I know his voice.—Ascanio?

Asca. Signior Camillo?

Cam. If the prince be here, 'tis Aurelian is engaged with him. Let us run in quickly, and prevent the mischief.

[*All go off. A little clashing within. After which they all re-enter.*

Fred. [*To* AUR.] I hope you are not wounded.

Aur. No, sir; but infinitely grieved, that——

Fred. No more; 'twas a mistake: But which way can we escape? the abbess is coming, I see the lights.

Luc. You cannot go by the gate, then. Ah me, unfortunate!

Cam. But over the wall you may: We have a ladder ready.—Adieu, ladies.—Curse on this ill luck, when we had just persuaded them to go with us!

Fred. Farewell, sweet Lucretia.

Lau. Good-night, Aurelian.

Aur. Ay, it might have proved a good one:

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Faith, shall I stay yet, and make it one, in spite of the abbess, and all her works?

Lau. The abbess is just here; you will be Caught in the spiritual trap, if you should tarry.

Aur. That will be time enough when we two marry. [*Exeunt severally.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter SOPHRONIA, LUCRETIA, LAURA, *and* VIOLETTA.

Soph. By this, then, it appears you all are guilty;
Only your ignorance of each other's crimes
Caused first that tumult, and this discovery.
Good heavens, that I should live to see this day!
Methinks these holy walls, the cells, the cloisters,
Should all have struck a secret horror on you:
And when, with unchaste thoughts,
You trod these lonely walks, you should have looked,
The venerable ghost of our first foundress
Should, with spread arms, have met you in her shroud,
And frighted you from sin.

Luc. Alas! you need not aggravate our crimes;
We know them to be great beyond excuse,
And have no hope, but only from your mercy.

Lau. Love is, indeed, no plea within these walls;
But, since we brought it hither, and were forced,
Not led by our own choice, to this strict life——

Vio. Too hard for our soft youth, and bands of love,
Which we before had knit——

Lau. Pity your blood,

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Which runs within our veins; and since heav'n puts it
In your sole power to ruin or to save,
Protect us from the sordid avarice
Of our domestic tyrant, who deserves not
That we should call him uncle, or your brother.

Soph. If, as I might, with justice I should punish,
No penance could be rigorous enough;
But I am willing to be more indulgent.
None of you are professed: And since I see
You are not fit for higher happiness,
You may have what you think the world can give you.

Luc. Let us adore you, madam!

Soph. You, Lucretia,
I shall advise within.

Vio. But for us, madam?

Soph. For you, dear nieces, I have long considered
The injuries you suffer from my brother,
And I rejoice it is in me to help you:
I will endeavour, from this very hour,
To put you both into your lovers' hands,
Who, by your own confession, have deserved you;
But so as (though 'tis done by my connivance)
It shall not seem to be with my consent.

Lau. You do an act of noble charity,
And may just Heaven reward it!

Enter HIPPOLITA, *and whispers* LUCRETIA.

Soph. Oh, you're a faithful portress of a cloister!
What is't you whisper to Lucretia?
On your obedience tell me.

Luc. Since you must know, madam,

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I have received a courtship from the prince
Of Mantua. The rest Hippolita may speak.

Hip. His page, Ascanio, is at the grate,
To know, from him, how you had scaped this danger;
And brings with him those habits——

Soph. I find that here has been a long commerce.
What habits?

Luc. I blush to tell you, madam; they were masking habits, in which we went abroad.

Soph. O strange impiety! Well, I conclude
You are no longer for religious clothing;
You would infect our order.

Luc. [*Kneeling.*] Madam, you promised us forgiveness.

Soph. I have done; for 'tis indeed too late to chide.

Hip. With Ascanio there are two gentlemen; Aurelian and Camillo, I think they call themselves, who came to me, recommended from the prince, and desired to speak with Laura and Violetta.

Soph. I think they are your lovers, nieces.

Vio. Madam, they are.

Hip. But, for fear of discovery from your uncle Mario, whose house, you know, joins to the monastery, are both in masquerade.

Soph. This opportunity must not be lost.
[*To* LAURA *and* VIOLETTA.
You two shall take the masking habits instantly,
And, in them, scape your jealous uncle's eyes.
When you are happy, make me so, by hearing your success.
[*Kisses them. Exeunt* LAU. *and* VIO.

Luc. A sudden thought is sprung within my mind,

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Which, by the same indulgence you have shown,
May make me happy too. I have not time
To tell you now, for fear I lose this opportunity.
When I return from speaking with Ascanio,
I shall declare the secrets of my love,
And crave your further help.

Soph. In all that virtue will permit, you shall not fail to find it. [*Exit* LUCRETIA.

Hip. Madam, the foolish fellow, whom we took, grows troublesome; what shall we do with him?

Soph. Send for the magistrate; he must be punished.—
Yet, hold; that would betray the other secret.
Let him be straight turned out, on this condition,
That he presume not ever to disclose
He was within these walls. I 'll speak with him.
Come, and attend me to him. [*Exit* SOPHRONIA.

Hip. You fit to be an abbess! We, that live out of the world, should, at least, have the common sense of those that live far from town; if a pedlar comes by them once a year, they will not let him go, without providing themselves with what they want. [*Exit after* SOPHRONIA.

SCENE II.—*The Street.*

Enter AURELIAN, CAMILLO, LAURA, VIOLETTA; *all in Masking-habits.*

Cam. This generosity of the abbess is never to be forgot; and it is the more to be esteemed, because it was the less to be expected.

Vio. At length, my Camillo, I see myself safe within your arms; and yet, methinks, I can never be enough secure of you; for now, I have nothing else to fear. I am afraid of you; I fear

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your constancy. They say possession is so dangerous to lovers, that more of them die of surfeits than of fasting.

Lau. You 'll be rambling too, Aurelian; I do not doubt it, if I would let you; but I 'll take care to be as little a wife, and as much a mistress to you, as is possible: I 'll be sure to be always pleasant, and never suffer you to be cloyed.

Aur. You are certainly in the right: Pleasantness of humour makes a wife last in the sweetmeat, when it will no longer in the fruit. But, pray, let 's make haste to the next honest priest that can say grace to us, and take our appetites while they are coming.

Cam. That way leads to the Austin-Friars; there lives a father of my acquaintance.

Lau. I have heard of him; he has a mighty stroke at matrimonies, and mumbles them over as fast, as if he were teaching us to forget them all the while.

Enter BENITO, *and overhears the last speech.*

*Ben. Capperi!** that is the voice of madam Laura. Now, Benito, is the time to repair the lost honour of thy wit, and to blot out the last adventure of the nunnery.

Vio. That way I hear company; let us go about by this other street, and shun them.

Ben. That voice I know too; 'tis the younger sister's, Violetta's. Now have these two most treacherously conveyed themselves out of the nunnery, for my master and Camillo,† and given

* [" Ha," " Heyday."—ED.]

† [Either this clause refers to " treacherously," or it must mean " *as if* for," etc. But the whole play is very carelessly written.—ED.]

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up their persons to those lewd rascals in masquerade; but I 'll prevent them. Help there! thieves and ravishers! Villainous maskers! stop, robbers! stop, ravishers!

Cam. We are pursued that way, let 's take this street.

Lau. Save yourselves, and leave us.

Cam. We 'll rather die, than leave you.

Enter, at several doors, Duke of MANTUA *and Guards, and Don* MARIO *and Servants, with Torches.*

Aur. So, now the way is shut up on both sides. We 'll die merrily, however:—have at the fairest.

[AURELIAN *and* CAMILLO *fall upon the Duke's Guards, and are seized behind by* MARIO'S *Servants. At the drawing of Swords,* BENITO *runs off.*

Duke. Are these insolencies usually committed in Rome by night? It has the fame of a well-governed city; and methinks, Don Mario, it does somewhat reflect on you to suffer these disorders.

Mar. They are not to be hindered in the Carnival: You see, sir, they have assumed the privilege of maskers.

Lau. [*To* AUR.] If my uncle know us, we are ruined; therefore be sure you do not speak.

Duke. How then can we be satisfied this was not a device of masking, rather than a design of ravishing?

Mar. Their accuser is fled, I saw him run at the beginning of the scuffle; but I 'll examine the ladies.

Vio. Now we are lost.

[*Duke coming near* LAURA, *takes notice of her habit.*

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Duke. [*Aside.*] 'Tis the same, 'tis the same; I know Lucretia by her habit: I 'm sure I am not mistaken.—Now, sir, you may cease your examination, I know the ladies.

Aur. [*To* CAM.] How the devil does he know them?

Cam. 'Tis alike to us; they are lost both ways.

Duke. [*Taking* LAURA *aside.*] Madam, you may confess yourself to me. Whatever your design was in leaving the nunnery, your reputation shall be safe. I 'll not discover you, provided you grant me the happiness I last requested.

Lau. I know not, sir, how you could possibly come to know me, or of my design in quitting the nunnery; but this I know, that my sister and myself are both unfortunate, except your highness be pleased to protect us from our uncle; at least, not to discover us.

Duke. His holiness, your uncle, shall never be acquainted with your flight, on condition you will wholly renounce my son, and give yourself to me.

Lau. Alas, sir, for whom do you mistake me?

Duke. I mistake you not, madam: I know you for Lucretia. You forget that your disguise betrays you.

Lau. Then, sir, I perceive I must disabuse you: If you please to withdraw a little, that I may not be seen by others, I will pull off my mask, and discover to you that Lucretia and I have no resemblance, but only in our misfortunes.

Duke. 'Tis in vain, madam, this dissembling: I protest, if you pull off your mask, I will hide my face, and not look upon you, to convince you that I know you.

Enter BENITO.

Ben. So, now the fray is over, a man may

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appear again with safety.—Oh, the rogues are caught, I see, and the damsels delivered. This was the effect of my valour at the second hand.

Aur. Look, look, Camillo! it was my perpetual fool that caused all this; and now he stands yonder, laughing at his mischief, as the devil is pictured, grinning behind the witch upon the gallows.

Ben. [*To* MARIO.] I see, sir, you have got your women, and I am glad on 't: I took them just flying from the nunnery.

Duke. [*To* LAU.] You see that fellow knows you too.

Mar. Were these women flying from a nunnery?

Ben. These women? heyday! then, it seems, you do not know they are your nieces.

Duke. His nieces, say you? Take heed, fellow, you shall be punished severely, if you mistake.

Cam. Speak to Benito in time, Aurelian.

Aur. The devil 's in him; he 's running downhill full speed, and there 's no stopping him.

Mar. My nieces?

Ben. Your nieces? Why, do you doubt it? I praise heaven I never met but with two halfwits in my life, and my master 's one of them; I will not name the other at this time.

Duke. I say, they are not they.

Ben. I am sure they are Laura and Violetta; and that those two rogues were running away with them, and that, I believe, with their consent.

Vio. Sister, 'tis in vain to deny ourselves; you see our ill-fortune pursues us unavoidably. [*Turning up her mask.*] Yes, sir, we are Laura and Violetta, whom you have made unhappy by your tyranny.

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Lau. [*Turning up her mask.*] And these two gentlemen are no ravishers, but——

Ben. How, no ravishers? Yes, to my knowledge they are—[*As he speaks,* AURELIAN *pulls off his mask.*] No ravishers, as madam Laura was saying; but two as honest gentlemen as e'er broke bread. My own dear master, and so forth!

[*Runs to* AUR., *who thrusts him back.*

Enter VALERIO, *and whispers the Duke, giving him a paper; which he reads, and seems pleased.*

Mar. Aurelian and Camillo! I 'll see you in safe custody; and, for these fugitives, go, carry them to my sister, and desire her to have a better care of her kinswomen.

Vio. We shall live yet to make you refund our portions. Farewell, Camillo; comfort yourself; remember there 's but a wall betwixt us.

Lau. And I 'll cut through that wall with vinegar, but I 'll come to you, Aurelian.

Aur. I 'll cut through the grates with aqua-fortis, but I 'll meet you. Think of these things, and despair, and die,* old gentleman.

[AURELIAN *and* CAMILLO *are carried off on one side, and* LAURA *and* VIOLETTA *on the other.*

Ben. All things go cross to men of sense: Would I had been born with the brains of a shopkeeper, that I might have thriven without know-

* [A reference, of course, to the ghost scene in *Richard III.* As such a reference was not likely to be made save to a popular acting play, it shows that Mr. Dutton Cook's assertion (*Nights at the Play*, i. 49) that "from the Restoration to the date of Cibber's adaptation (1700) there would seem to have been no attempt made to revive the play," is at least hasty.—ED.]

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ing why I did so. Now must I follow my master to the prison, and, like an ignorant customer that comes to buy, must offer him my backside, tell him I trust to his honesty, and desire him to please himself, and so be satisfied. [*Exit.*

Duke. [*To* VAL.] I am overjoyed; I 'll see her immediately: Now my business with Don Mario is at an end, I need not desire his company to introduce me to the abbess; this assignation from Lucretia shows me a nearer way.—Noble Don Mario, it was my business, when this accident happened in the street, to have made you a visit; but now I am prevented by an occasion which calls me another way.

Mar. I receive the intention of that honour as the greatest happiness that could befall me: In the meantime, if my attendance——

Duke. By no means, sir, I must of necessity go in private; and therefore, if you please, you shall omit the ceremony.

Mar. A happy even to your highness.—Now will I go to my sister, the abbess, before I sleep, and desire her to take more care of her flock, or, for all our relation, I shall make complaint, and endeavour to ease her of her charge. [*Exit.*

Duke. So, now we are alone, what said Lucretia?

Val. When first I pressed her to this assignation,
She spoke like one in doubt what she should do;
She demurred much upon the decency of it,
And somewhat too she seemed to urge, of her
Engagement to the prince: In short, sir,
I perceived her wavering, and closed with the opportunity.

Duke. O, when women are once irresolute, betwixt the former love and the new one, they

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are sure to come over to the latter. The wind, their nearest likeness, seldom chops about to return into the old corner.

Val. In conclusion, she consented to the interview; and for the rest, I urged it not, for I suppose she will hear reason sooner from your mouth than mine.

Duke. Her letter is of the same tenor with her discourse, full of doubts and doubles; like a hunted hare when she is near tired. The garden, you say, is the place appointed?

Val. It is, sir; and the next half hour the time. But, sir, I fear the prince your son will never bear the loss of her with patience.

Duke. 'Tis no matter; let the young gallant storm to-night, to-morrow he departs from Rome.

Val. That, sir, will be severe.

Duke. He has already received my commands to travel into Germany. I know it stung him to the quick, but he's too dangerous a rival: the soldiers love him too; when he's absent they will respect me more. But I defer my happiness too long; dismiss my guards there.

[*Exeunt Guards.*

The pleasures of old age brook no delay;
Seldom they come, and soon they fly away.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Enter FREDERICK *and* ASCANIO.

Fred. 'Tis true, he is my father; but when nature
Is dead in him, why should it live in me?
What have I done that I am banished Rome,
The world's delight, and my soul's joy, Lucretia,

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And sent to reel with midnight beasts in Almain!
I cannot, will not, bear it.

Asca. I'm sure you need not, sir; the army is all yours; they wish a youthful monarch, and will resent your injuries

Fred. Heaven forbid it! and yet I cannot lose Lucretia.
There's something I would do, and yet would shun
The ill that must attend it.

Asca. You must resolve, for the time presses. She told me, this hour, she had sent for your father: what she means I know not, for she seemed doubtful, and would not tell me her intention.

Fred. If she be false——yet, why should I suspect her? Yet why should I not? She's a woman; that includes ambition and inconstancy; then, she's tempted high: 'twere unreasonable to expect she should be faithful: Well, something I have resolved, and will about it instantly; and if my friends prove faithful, I shall prevent the worst.

Enter AURELIAN *and* CAMILLO, *guarded.*

Aurelian and Camillo? How came you thus attended?

Cam. You may guess at the occasion, sir; pursuing the adventure which brought us to meet you in the garden, we were taken by Don Mario.

Aur. And, as the devil would have it, when both we and our mistresses were in expectation of a more pleasing lodging.

Fred. Faith, that's very hard, when a man has charged and primed, and taken aim, to be hindered of his shoot.—Soldiers, release these gentlemen, I'll answer it.

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Cap. Sir, we dare not disobey our orders.

Fred. I 'll stand betwixt you and danger. In the meantime take this, as an acknowledgment of the kindness you do me.

Cap. Ay, marry, there 's rhetoric in gold: who can deny these arguments? Sir, you may dispose of our prisoners as you please; we 'll use your name, if we are called in question.

Fred. Do so. Good-night, good soldiers. [*Exeunt soldiers.*] Now, gentlemen, no thanks; you 'll find occasion instantly to reimburse me of my kindness.

Cam. Nothing but want of liberty could have hindered us from serving you.

Fred. Meet me within this half hour, at our monastery; and if, in the meantime, you can pick up a dozen of good fellows, who dare venture their lives bravely, bring them with you.

Aur. I hope the cause is bad too, otherwise we shall not deserve your thanks. May it be for demolishing that cursed monastery!

Fred. Come, Ascanio, follow me.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE IV.—*The Nunnery Garden.*

Enter DUKE *and* LUCRETIA.

Luc. In making this appointment,
I go too far, for one of my profession;
But I have a divining soul within me,
Which tells me, trust reposed in noble natures
Obliges them the more.

Duke. I come to be commanded, not to govern:
Those few soft words you sent me, have quite altered

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My rugged nature; if it still be violent,
'Tis only fierce and eager to obey you;
Like some impetuous flood, which, mastered once,
With double force bends backward.
The place of treaty shows you strongest here;
For still the vanquished sues for peace abroad,
While the proud victor makes his terms at home.
Luc. That peace, I see, will not be hard to make,
When either side shows confidence of noble dealing
From the other.
Duke. And this, sure, is our case, since both are met alone.
Luc. 'Tis mine, sir, more than yours.
To meet you single, shows I trust your virtue;
But you appear distrustful of my love.
Duke. You wrong me much; I am not.
Luc. Excuse me, sir, you keep a curb upon me;
You awe me with a letter, which you hold
As hostage of my love; and hostages
Are ne'er required but from suspected faith.
Duke. We are not yet in terms of perfect peace;
Whene'er you please to seal the articles,
Your pledge shall be restored.
Luc. That were the way to keep us still at distance;
For what we fear, we cannot truly love.
Duke. But how can I be then secure, that, when
Your fear is o'er, your love will still continue?
Luc. Make trial of my gratitude; you 'll find
I can acknowledge kindness.
Duke. But that were to forego the faster hold,
To take a loose, and weaker.

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Would you not judge him mad, who held a lion
In chains of steel, and changed them for a twine?
Luc. But love is soft,
Not of the lion's nature, but the dove's;
An iron chain would hang too heavy on a tender neck.
Duke. Since on one side there must be confidence,
Why may not I expect, as well as you,
To have it plac'd in me? Repose your trust
Upon my royal word.
Luc. As 'tis the privilege of womankind,
That men should court our love,
And make the first advances; so it follows,
That you should first oblige; for 'tis our weakness
Gives us more cause of fear, and therefore you,
Who are the stronger sex, should first secure it.
Duke. But, madam, as you talk of fear from me,
I may as well suspect design from you.
Luc. Design! of giving you my love more freely;
Of making you a title to my heart,
Where you by force would reign.
Duke. O that I could believe you! But your words
Are not enough disorder'd for true love;
They are not plain, and hearty, as are mine;
But full of art, and close insinuation:
You promise all, but give me not one proof
Of love before; not the least earnest of it.
Luc. And what is then this midnight conversation?
These silent hours divided from my sleep?
Nay, more, stolen from my prayers with sacrilege,
And here transferred to you? This guilty hand,

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Which should be used in dropping holy beads,
But now bequeathed to yours? This heaving heart,
Which only should be throbbing for my sins,
But which now beats uneven time for you?
These are my arts! and these are my designs!
Duke. I love you more, Lucretia, than my soul;
Nay, than yours too; for I would venture both,
That I might now enjoy you; and if what
You ask me did not make me fear to lose you,
Though it were even my life, you should not be denied it.
Luc. Then I will ask no more.
Keep still my letter, to upbraid me with it:
To say, when I am sullied with your lust,
And fit to be forsaken,—Go, Lucretia,
To your first love; for this, for this, I leave you.
Duke. Oh, madam, never think that day can come!
Luc. It must, it will; I read it in your looks;
You will betray me, when I 'm once engaged.
Duke. If not my faith, your beauty will secure you.
Luc. My beauty is a flower upon the stalk,
Goodly to see; but, gathered for the scent,
And once with eagerness pressed to your nostrils,
The sweets drawn out, 'tis thrown with scorn away.
But I am glad I find you out so soon;
I simply loved, and meant (with shame I own it)
To trust my virgin honour in your hands.
I asked not wealth for hire; and, but by chance
(I wonder that I thought on 't), begged one trial,
And, but for form, to have pretence to yield,
And that you have denied me. Farewell! I could
Have loved you, and yet, perhaps, I——

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Duke. O speak, speak out, and do not drown that word;
It seemed as if it would have been a kind one;
And yours are much too precious to be lost.
Luc. Perhaps——I cannot yet leave loving you.
There 'twas. But I recalled it in my mind,
And made it false before I gave it air.
Once more, farewell——I wonnot,—
Now I can say I wonnot, wonnot love you.
[*Going.*
Duke. You shall; and this shall be the seal of my affection. [*Gives the letter.*
There take it, my Lucretia: I give it with more joy,
Than I with grief received it.
Luc. Good-night; I 'll thank you for 't some other time.
Duke. You 'll not abuse my love?
Luc. No; but secure my honour.
Duke. I 'll force it from your hands.
[LUCRETIA *runs.*
Luc. Help, help, or I am ravished! help, for heaven's sake!

HIPPOLITA, LAURA, *and* VIOLETTA, *within, at several places.*

Within. Help, help Lucretia! they bear away Lucretia by force.
Duke. I think there 's a devil in every corner.

Enter VALERIO.

Val. Sir, the design was laid on purpose for you, and all the women placed to cry. Make haste away; avoid the shame, for heaven's sake.
Duke. [*Going.*] O, I could fire this monastery!

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Enter FREDERICK *and* ASCANIO.

[FREDERICK, *entering, speaks as to some behind him.*]

Fred. Pain of your lives, let none of you presume to enter but myself.

Duke. My son!—O, I could burst with spite, and die with shame, to be thus apprehended! this is the baseness and cowardice of guilt: an army now were not so dreadful to me as that son, o'er whom the right of nature gives me power.

Fred. Sir, I am come——

Duke. To laugh at first, and then to blaze abroad,
The weakness and the follies of your father.

Val. Sir, he has men in arms attending him.

Duke. I know my doom then. You have taken a popular occasion; I am now a ravisher of chastity, fit to be made prisoner first, and then deposed.

Fred. You will not hear me, sir.

Duke. No, I confess I have deserved my fate;
For, what had these grey hairs to do with love?
Or, if the unseemly folly would possess me,
Why should I choose to make my son my rival?

Fred. Sir, you may add, you banished me from Rome,
And, from the light of it, Lucretia's eyes.

Duke. Nay, if thou aggravat'st my crimes, thou giv'st
Me right to justify them: thou doubly art my slave,
Both son and subject. I can do thee no wrong,
Nor hast thou right to arraign or punish me:
But thou inquir'st into thy father's years;
Thy swift ambition could not stay my death,
But must ride post to empire. Lead me now;

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Thy crimes have made me guiltless to myself,
And given me face to bear the public scorn.
You have a guard without?
Fred. I have some friends.
Duke. Speak plainly your intent.
I love not a sophisticated truth,
With an allay of lie in 't.
Fred. [*Kneeling.*] This is not, sir, the posture of a rebel,
But of a suppliant; if the name of son
Be too much honour to me.
What first I purpos'd, I scarce know myself.
Love, anger, and revenge, then rolled within me,
And yet, even then, I was not hurried further
Than to preserve my own.
Duke. Your own! What mean you?
Fred. My love, and my Lucretia, which I thought,
In my then boiling passion, you pursued
With some injustice, and much violence;
This led me to repel that force by force.
'Twas easy to surprise you, when I knew
Of your intended visit.
Duke. Thank my folly.
Fred. But reason now has reassumed its place,
And makes me see how black a crime it is
To use a force upon my prince and father.
Duke. You give me hope you will resign Lucretia.
Fred. Ah no; I never can resign her to you:
But, sir, I can my life; which, on my knees,
I tender, as the atoning sacrifice:
Or if your hand (because you are a father)
Be loth to take away that life you gave,
I will redeem your crime, by making it
My own: So you shall still be innocent, and I
Die blessed, and unindebted for my being.

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Duke. O Frederick, you are too much a son,
[*Embracing him.*
And I too little am a father: you,
And you alone, have merited Lucretia;
'Tis now my only grief,
I can do nothing to requite this virtue:
For to restore her to you,
Is not an act of generosity,
But a scant, niggard justice; yet I love her
So much, that even this little, which I do,
Is like the bounty of an usurer;
High to be priz'd from me,
Because 'tis drawn from such a wretched mind.

Fred. You give me now a second, better life;
[*Kissing his hand.*
But,—that the gift may be more easy to you,—
Consider, sir, Lucretia did not love you,—
I fear to say, ne'er would.

Duke. You do well to help me to o'ercome that difficulty:
I 'll weigh that, too, hereafter. For a love,
So violent as mine, will ask a long time,
And much of reason, to effect the cure.
My present care shall be to make you happy;
For that will make my wish impossible,
And then the remedies will be more easy.

Enter SOPHRONIA, LUCRETIA, VIOLETTA, LAURA, HIPPOLITA.

Soph. I have, with joy, o'erheard this happy change,
And come with blessings to applaud your conquest
Over the greatest of mankind, yourself.

Duke. I hope 'twill be a full and lasting one.

Luc. Thus, let me kneel, and pay my thanks and duty,
[*Kneeling.*
Both to my prince and father.

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Duke. Rise, rise, too charming maid, for yet I cannot
Call you my daughter: that first name, Lucretia,
Hangs on my lips, and would be still pronounced.
Look not too kindly on me; one sweet glance,
Perhaps, would ruin both: therefore, I 'll go
And try to get new strength to bear your eyes.
Till then, farewell. Be sure you love my Frederick,
And do not hate his father.

[*Exeunt Duke and* VALERIO.

Fred. [*At the door.*] Now, friends, you may appear.

Enter AURELIAN, CAMILLO, BENITO.

Your pardon, madam, that we thus intrude
On holy ground: yourself best know it could not
Be avoided, and it shall be my care it be excused.

Soph. Though sovereign princes bear a privilege
Of entering when they please within our walls,
In others 'tis a crime past dispensation;
And therefore, to avoid a public scandal,
Be pleased, sir, to retire, and quit this garden.

Aur. We shall obey you, madam; but that we may do it with less regret, we hope you will give these ladies leave to accompany us.

Soph. They shall.
And, nieces, for myself, I only ask you
To justify my conduct to the world,
That none may think I have betrayed a trust,
But freed you from a tyranny.

Lau. Our duty binds us to acknowledge it.

Cam. And our gratitude to witness it.

Vio. With a holy and lasting remembrance of your favour.

Fred. And it shall be my care, either by reason

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to bend your uncle's will, or by my father's interest, to force your dowry from his hands.

Ben. [*To* AUR.] Pray, sir, let us make haste over these walls again; these gardens are unlucky to me; I have lost my reputation of music in one of them, and of wit in the other.

Aur. [*To* LAU.] Now, Laura, you may take your choice betwixt the two Benitos, and consider whether you had rather he should serenade you in the garden, or I in bed to-night.

Lau. You may be sure I shall give sentence for Benito; for the effect of your serenading would be to make me pay the music nine months hence.

Hip. [*To* ASCA.] You see, brother, here's a general gaol-delivery: there has been a great deal of bustle and disturbance in the cloister to-night; enough to distract a soul which is given up, like me, to contemplation: and therefore, if you think fit, I could even be content to retire, with you, into the world; and, by way of penance, to marry you; which, as husbands and wives go now, is a greater mortification than a nunnery.

Asca. No, sister; if you love me, keep to your monastery: I 'll come now and then to the grate and beg you a recreation. But I know myself so well, that if I had you one twelvemonth in the world, I should run myself into a cloister, to be rid of you.

Soph. Nieces, once more farewell. Adieu, Lucretia: My wishes and my prayers attend you all.

Luc. [*To* FRED.] I am so fearful,
That, though I gladly run to your embraces,
Yet, venturing in the world a second time,
Methinks I put to sea in a rough storm,
With shipwrecks round about me.

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Fred. My dear, be kinder to yourself and me,
And let not fear fright back our coming joys;
For we, at length, stand reconciled to fate:
And now to fear, when to such bliss we move,
Were not to doubt our fortune, but our love.

[*Exeunt.*

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EPILOGUE.

Some have expected, from our bills to-day,
To find a satire in our poet's play.
The zealous rout from Coleman-street did run,
To see the story of the Friar and Nun;
Or tales, yet more ridiculous to hear,
Vouched by their vicar of ten pounds a-year,—
Of Nuns, who did against temptation pray,
And discipline laid on the pleasant way:
Or that, to please the malice of the town,
Our poet should in some close cell have shown
Some sister, playing at content alone:
This they did hope; the other side did fear;
And both, you see, alike are cozened here.
Some thought the title of our play to blame;
They liked the thing, but yet abhorred the name:
Like modest punks, who all you ask afford,
But, for the world, they would not name that word.
Yet, if you 'll credit what I heard him say,
Our poet meant no scandal in his play;
His Nuns are good, which on the stage are shown,
And, sure, behind our scenes you 'll look for none.

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.

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